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ONE

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SEPTEMBER 1960

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Between Ourselves

THE COVER

A view of the massive arches and their rectangular frames of the impressive Badshahi Mosque at Lahore, Pakistan, built by the Emperor of India, Aurangzeb (d. 1707 C.E.) in 1675 C.E.

Our picture depicts forcefully the majestic grandeur of the portal of the Badshahi Mosque. The building itself is faced with red sandstone carried some 300 miles from the quarries of Agra, India, and has three magnificent bulbous domes executed in white marble.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

The *Maulana* Muhammad 'Ali, M.A., LL.B. (d. 1931), a devout Pakistani Muslim who spent the whole of his life in writing on and expounding Islam. In modern times there is no other Muslim scholar who has written in English so extensively and with such profound scholarship on Islam and its teaching. He has left behind him many books, one of which, *The Religion of Islam*, a voluminous reference book dealing with practically every aspect of Islam, is fast acquiring the status of a classic on Islam.

★

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The Islamic Review

SEPTEMBER 1960

48th YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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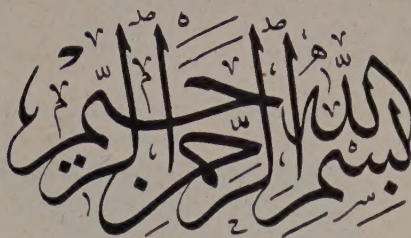
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نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ خَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ

"Muhammad is . . . the Messenger of God and the Last of the Prophets . . ." —THE HOLY QUR'AN 33 : 40
"There will be no Prophet after me" —THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

VOL. XLVIII No. 9

SEPTEMBER 1960 C.E.

Rabi' al-awwal 1380 A.H.

THE BIRTHDAY OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

12th Rabi' al-awwal 1380 A.H.—4th September, 1960

A Challenge to the Scholarship of the Muslim World to produce a Biography of the Prophet Muhammad which could satisfy and influence world opinion in the sphere of morals

The real Meaning of the Invocation of the Blessing of God on the Prophet Muhammed

The Muslims of the world, who number about 450 million, are celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, who was born in 571 C.E. (on 12th Rabi' al-awwal, the which date coincides this year with 4th September 1960). Throughout this month meetings, large and small, are held when lectures on the life of the Prophet Muhammad are delivered. In some parts of the Muslim world elaborate festivities are organized to celebrate this momentous and auspicious event. Principal streets are lit up and mosques and their minarets illuminated. In towns like Cairo the occasion is marked by great pomp and show. The head of the State attends the ceremonious function and is accompanied by religious and State dignitaries. At all such meetings a life history of the Prophet Muhammad is told in which his achievements are recounted with a marked emphasis laid on the sublime moral virtues he possessed. These meetings as a rule are punctuated with ejaculations, sometimes by the speaker and at other times by one of the audience, which exhort the audience to invoke the blessings of God on His Prophet. Private meetings usually end up with hymnal singing of the ceremonious *salaam* (greeting to the Prophet Muhammad).

Now all this is done in obedience to the commandment contained in the Qur'an, which reads : " Surely God and His angels bless the Prophet. O you who believe ! Call for the divine blessings on him with a becoming salutation " (33:56).

This practice has been in action for the last fourteen centuries. If mere invocations to God were enough, the Prophet Muhammad would now be the most appreciated and

respected personage in the world. But we know it for a fact that although he and his teachings have claimed the allegiance of untold millions of peoples through the centuries, one cannot but agree with the views of a recent British biographer-student of the Prophet Muhammad, Mr. W. M. Montgomery Watt, of the University of Edinburgh, who in his *Muhammad at Medina*, London, 1956, observes, "*none of the great figures of the West is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad* (italics ours, Ed., I.R.). Western writers have mostly been prone to believe the worst of Muhammad and wherever an objectionable interpretation of an act seemed plausible, have tended to accept it as a fact". We believe we are not exaggerating if we extend this statement to include also the Eastern world, which is no better informed on the Prophet Muhammad than is the West.

This state of affairs evidently is serious, and imposes a heavy responsibility on Muslims who very seldom are seen to realize that if there is lack of appreciation of the Prophet on the part of the West, they cannot lay the blame at its door. In the first place the West on the whole has never had the benefit of coming into direct contact with the Prophet and his teaching with the exception of the soil of Spain, where his adversaries saw to it that he and his teachings were never allowed to fasten their feet. Thus whatever it received was second-hand. In the second place (and this cannot be over-emphasized), Muslims themselves have as yet not produced a biography in any European language which could command the respect of the non-Muslim scholarly world. The result is that from one year to another old and grotesque

prejudices about the Prophet Muhammad are allowed to linger on. This stark reality forces one to the conclusion that Muslims in a body have never acquitted themselves, especially in our own times, of the responsibility of presenting the Prophet Muhammad to the Western world in particular and the rest of the world in general. Instead they have been complacently believing that odes sung in praise of the Prophet on his Birthday will serve to raise him in the estimation of non-Muslims. That the judgment of the world is still not in his favour serves instead to bring home the fact that mere singing of odes and recounting the glorious deeds he performed is not and has not been enough, and will not convince the world of the greatness of the Prophet Muhammad. The belief that the recitation of the invocational formula of "May the blessings of God be upon him!" whenever the name of the Prophet is mentioned will endear him to the world has resulted in the inescapable reality that it has brought no appreciable change in the attitude of the world in general towards him who, of all the great religious personages, is still the one who is most misunderstood.

It is very convenient to cast the blame on others. But the time has come when the Muslims themselves learned to pause and think if it is not they who are really to blame. We believe that Muslims on the whole never understood the real implication of the Qur'anic commandment which asks them to invoke the blessings of God on the Prophet Muhammad.

God in His perfect knowledge knew that as a result of the unique role of the Prophet Muhammad — Muhammad is the only historical religious personage whose words and doings have been handed down to us through the agency of 13,000 persons who came into contact with him — it would be very easy for his detractors to misrepresent him. Thus, by enjoining upon Muslims to invoke the blessings of God, the real purpose was not a mere recitation of a formula consisting of a few words but to remind themselves again and again of putting the commandment into active practice. In other words, to keep a watchful eye on how the non-Muslim world misrepresented the Prophet Muhammad and adopt ways and means to counteract all those steps that distort his picture in the minds of the people. One such step is the production of a biography of the Prophet. In drawing attention of the Muslim world to this imperative necessity of today, we are fully conscious of the immense difficulties in the path of Muslim scholars themselves. But that is a separate subject in a class by itself. It can only be adumbrated here.

This brings to our mind the experience of the great Indian Muslim political leader, Muhammad 'Ali, who while on a visit to England in 1927 went to see the famous British writer H. G.

Wells, who in his book *The Outline of History*, had left him disturbed. He thought that an exchange of views on his (Wells') opinions about the Prophet Muhammad might enable Wells to see eye to eye with him. After having listened to Muhammad 'Ali, Mr. Wells said in so many words that although he was in perfect agreement with him on the matter of the teaching of Islam

being so good as not to be improved upon, he was sorry that he could not share his (Muhammad 'Ali's) appraisal of Muhammad, whom Muhammad 'Ali, in common with all Muslims, regarded as a perfect exemplar in all the three aspects — physical, moral and spiritual — of the life of man. The point that we wish to stress is that it is not the teaching of Islam but the personality of the Prophet Muhammad that was an impediment in the way of H. G. Wells. This cannot be emphasized overmuch that Mr. Wells is not an isolated case. It would be nearer the truth if we said that he was typical of the average Westerner in his approach to Islam and the Prophet Muhammad.

The challenge of the non-Muslim world to Muslim scholarship.

Here once more we will quote the views of Mr. Montgomery Watt from his *Muhammad at Medina* so that Muslims understood what is required of them by the non-Muslim world. Mr. Montgomery Watt says:

"The world is becoming increasingly one world, and in this one world there is a tendency towards unification and uniformity. Because of this tendency the day will doubtless come when there will be a set of moral principles which not merely claim universal validity but are actually accepted almost universally throughout the one world. Now Muslims claim that Muhammad is a model of conduct and character for all mankind. In so doing they invite world opinion to pass judgment on him. Up till now the matter has received scant attention from world opinion, but, because of the strength of Islam, it will eventually have to be given serious consideration. Are any principles to be learnt from the life and teaching of Muhammad that will contribute to the one morality of the future?"

"To this question the world has not yet given a final answer. What has been said so far by Muslims in support of their claims for Muhammad can be regarded as no more than a preliminary statement of the case, and few non-Muslims have been convinced by it. Nevertheless the issue still remains open. How the world answers the question about Muhammad depends to some extent on what the Muslims of today do. They still have an opportunity to give

Continued on page 11

The President of Pakistan's Message on the auspicious occasion of the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad



President Muhammad Ayyub Khan, in a message to the people of Pakistan on the occasion of the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, said:

"Id Milad al-Nabi (the festival of the Birthday of the Prophet) is a day which calls for deep reflection and meditation on the life and message of the last Prophet of God (Peace be on him!). The seal of finality which has since been put on divine revelation imposes a great burden of responsibility on every man, woman and child of the entire ummah (Muslim nation). It now falls on them to preserve, promote and practise the word of God as revealed and implemented by the truest, the noblest and the most perfect of His creatures.

"The fulfilment of this mission requires courage, character and a straight and searching mind which does not shun the spirit of free and honest inquiry.

"The relentless quest for the unknown which the modern age has released will give recognition to religion only to the extent religion itself moves forward rather than backwards. This is a dangerous period in which the faith of man has to keep pace with his fast-widening horizons of knowledge and comprehension.

"The dynamic modernism of Islam contains all the attributes necessary to face the challenge of this new age, provided the Muslims themselves learn to pay real rather than mere lip-service to the principles of their great faith. This is the truest homage which we can, on this day, resolve to pay to the endearing and noble life of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him!)."

lims in support of their claims for Muhammad can be regarded as no more than a preliminary statement of the case, and few non-Muslims have been convinced by it. Nevertheless the issue still remains open. How the world answers the question about Muhammad depends to some extent on what the Muslims of today do. They still have an opportunity to give

الله

نور السموات والأرض

(GOD is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth)

ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF HUMANITY

By The MAULANA MUHAMMAD 'ALI

Islam is the name by which the religion preached by the Prophet Muhammad, who appeared in Arabia about thirteen hundred years ago, is known, and it is the last of the great religions of the world. This religion is commonly known in the West as Muhammadanism, a name adopted in imitation of such names as Christianity and Buddhism, but it is quite unknown to the Muslims themselves. According to the Qur'án, the sacred Book of Islam, the religion of Islam is as wide in its conception as humanity itself. It did not originate from the preaching of the Prophet Muhammad, but it was as well the religion of the prophets that went before him. Islam was the religion of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus: it was, in fact, the religion of every prophet of God who appeared in any part of the world. Nay, Islam is the religion of every human child that is born according to the Prophet, who, to be accurate, is not the originator, but the latest exponent of that Divine system. And, according to the Qur'án, Islam is the natural religion of man: "The nature made by God in which He has created men — that is the right religion" (30 : 30). And since, according to the Qur'án, prophets were raised among different nations in different ages, and the religion of every prophet was, in its pristine purity, no other than Islam, the scope of their religion, in the true sense of the word, extends as far back, and is as wide as humanity itself, the fundamental principles always remaining the same, the accidents changing with the changing needs of humanity. The latest phase of Islam is that which made its appearance in the world with the advent of the Prophet Muhammad (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him!).

Significance of the name

The name Islam was not invented, as in the case of other religions, by those who professed it. This name is, on

the other hand, expressly given to this religion in the Holy Qur'án. It says: "I have chosen for you Islam as a religion" (5 : 3). And in another place: "Verily the religion with God is Islam". It is, moreover, a significant name; in fact, the word Islam indicates the very essence of the religious system known by that name. Its primary significance is the "making of peace", and the idea of "peace" is the dominant idea in Islam. A Muslim, according to the Qur'án, is he who has made his peace with God and man, with the Creator as well as His creatures. Peace with God implies complete submission to His will Who is the source of all purity and goodness, and peace with man implies the doing of good to fellow-man; and both these ideas are briefly but beautifully expressed in 2 : 112, which says: "Yes, he who submits himself entirely to God, and he is the doer of good (to others), these shall have no fear nor shall they grieve". That and that only is *salvation* according to the Qur'án. And as the Muslim is in perfect peace, he enjoys peace of mind and contentment (16 : 106). "Peace" is the greeting of one Muslim to another, and "Peace" shall also be the greeting of those in paradise: "And their greeting therein shall be peace" (10 : 10). Nay in the paradise which Islam depicts, no word shall be heard except "Peace, Peace", as the Qur'án says: "They shall hear therein no vain words nor sinful discourse, but they shall hear only the words 'Peace, Peace'" (56 : 26). The "Author of peace and safety" is also a name of God mentioned in the Qur'án (59 : 23), and the goal to which Islam leads is the "Abode of Peace", as is said in 10 : 25: "And God invites to the abode of peace". Peace is, therefore, the essence of Islam, being the root from which it springs and the fruit which it yields, and Islam is thus pre-eminently the "Religion of Peace".

The distinctive characteristic of Islam

The great characteristic of Islam is that it requires its followers to believe that all the great religions of the world that prevailed before it were revealed by God; and thus Islam laid down the basis of peace and harmony among the religions of the world. According to the Qur'án, all religions have Divine revelation as the common basis from which they start. The great mission of Islam was not, however, to preach this truth only, which, on account of the isolation from each other of the different nations of the earth, had not been preached before, but also to correct the errors which had found their way into various religions, to sift truth from error, to preach the truths which had not been preached before on account of the special circumstances of society or the early stage of its development, and most important of all, to gather together in one book the truths which were contained in any Divine revelation granted to any people for the guidance of man, and, last of all, to meet all the spiritual and moral requirements of an ever-advancing humanity. Accordingly the Qur'án is spoken of as "pure pages wherein are (all the) right books" (98:2). And as a natural sequence it is declared: "This day have I made perfect for you your religion, and completed upon you my blessings, and chosen for you Islam as a religion" (5:3). Islam thus requires us to believe in all truth revealed to any prophet of any nation, and to hold in the highest esteem and veneration all the prophets of all the nations. This broad-minded doctrine of the Prophet Muhammad forms one of the most signal characteristics of the faith of Islam.

An historical religion

I have said enough on the position of Islam among the religions of the world and the position of the Qur'án among the sacred scriptures of the human race, but I wish to note one more peculiarity of Islam by way of introduction. Islam is beyond all doubt an historical religion, and its founder an historical personage. It is a fact which even a hostile critic of Islam has to admit. Every event of the Prophet's life can be read in the light of history, and the Qur'án, which is the source of all the spiritual and social laws of Islam, is, as has been truly remarked by Bosworth Smith, "a book absolutely unique in its origin, in its preservation . . . on the substantial authenticity of which no one has ever been able to cast a serious doubt". Even Muir admits that "there is probably in the world no other work which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text", and adds with Von Hammer that "we hold the Qur'án to be as surely Muhammad's word as the Muhammadans hold it to be the Word of God". Having a book of Divine revelation so safely preserved through centuries to guide him for his spiritual and moral welfare, and the example of such a great and noble Prophet whose varied experiences in life furnish the best rules of conduct in all the different phases of human life, a Muslim is sure that he has not rejected any truth which was ever revealed by God to any nation, and that he has not set as naught any good which was to be found in the life of any good man. A Muslim thus not only believes in the truth of all Divine revelations and accepts the sacred leaders of all people, but also follows all the lasting and permanent truths contained in them, and imitates all good men in all the good that is to be found in their lives.

The fundamental principles of Islam

The main principles of Islam are given in the very beginning of the Qur'án, which opens with the words: "This

book, there is no doubt in it, is a guidance for those who are careful of their duties — those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them, and those who believe in what has been revealed to thee and what was revealed before thee and of the hereafter, they are sure" (2:2-4). These verses point out the essential principles which must be accepted by those who would follow the Qur'án. Here we have three main points of belief and two main points of practice, or three theoretical and two practical ordinances. Before I take up these points separately, I think it necessary to point out, as indicated in these verses, that in Islam mere belief counts for nothing if not carried into practice. "Those who believe and do good" is the ever-recurring description of the



The late Maulana Muhammad 'Ali

righteous as given in the Qur'án. Right belief is the good seed which can only grow into a good tree if it receives nourishment from the soil in which it is placed. That nourishment is given by good deeds. Another point necessary to be borne in mind in connection with the five principles of belief and practice mentioned in the verse quoted above is that they are, in one form or another, universally accepted by the human race. The five principles as already indicated are (1) a belief in God, the Great Unseen, (2) in Divine revelation, and (3) in the life to come; and on the practical side, (4) prayer to God which is the source from which springs the love of God, and (5) charity in its broadest sense, indicating respectively the performances of our duties to God and man. Now, these five principles as the principles of belief and action are recognized by all nations of the earth, and these are the common principles on which all

religions are based. In fact, these five fundamental principles of the religion of Islam are imprinted on human nature. Below I take them separately as detailed in the Qur'an.

Conception of God in Islam

Of the three fundamental principles of belief, the first is a belief in God. The belief in a power higher than man can be traced back to the remotest antiquity, to the earliest times to which history can take us, but different peoples in different ages and different countries have had different conceptions of the Divine Being. Islam in the first place preaches a God Who is above all tribal deities and national gods. The God of Islam is not the God of a particular nation, so that He should confine His blessings to it alone, but He is described in the opening words of the Qur'an to be the "Lord of the worlds" (1 : 1) and thus, while giving the highest conception of the Divine Being, it also enlarges the circle of the brotherhood of man so as to include all nations of the earth, thereby widening the outlook and sympathies of man. Among the numerous sublime attributes of the Divine Being to which the Holy Qur'an gives expression, the attribute of mercy occupies the highest place. It is with the names *Ar-Rahmān* and *Ar-Rahīm* that every chapter of the Holy Book opens. Beneficent and Merciful convey to the English reader of the Qur'an only a very imperfect idea of the deep and all-encompassing love and mercy of God as indicated by the words *Ar-Rahmān* and *Ar-Rahīm*. "My Mercy comprehends all (conceivable) things," says the Qur'an (7 : 156). Hence the Messenger who preached this conception of the Divine Being is rightly called in the Qur'an "a mercy to all the worlds" (21 : 107). Again, God is the Author of all that exists. A denial of His power of creation would have given a death-blow to the very loftiness and sublimity of the conception of the Divine Being. Here is but one description of His attributes : "He is God besides Whom there is none who should be served, the Knower of the unseen and the seen ; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. He is God besides Whom there is no God, the King, the Holy, the Author of Peace, the Granter of Security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Restorer of every loss, the Professor of every greatness ; high is God, above what they set up with Him. He is God, the Creator, the Maker,¹ the Fashioner. His are the most excellent and beautiful attributes (that man can imaginè) ; everything that exists in the heavens and the earth declares His glory and His perfection, and He is the Mighty, the wise" (59 : 22-24). He is God, the all-Hearing, the all-Seeing, the Deliverer from every affliction, the Generous, the Gracious, the Forgiving, the Near-at-hand, Who loves good and hates evil, Who will take account of all human actions. There is a very large number of other attributes of the Divine Being which give a loftiness to the conception of God in the Qur'an not met with in any other revealed book.

The unity of God

Unity of God is the one great theme of the Qur'an. The laws of nature which we find working in the universe, man's own nature, and the teachings of the prophets of yore, are again and again appealed to as giving clear indication of the Unity of the Maker. Consider the creation of the

innumerable heavenly bodies : are they not with their apparent diversities all subject to one and the same law? Think over what you see in the earth itself, its organic and inorganic worlds, the plant and animal life, the solid earth, the seas and the rivers, the great mountains : is there not unity in all this diversity? Ponder over your own nature, how your very colours and tongues differ from one another, yet in spite of all these differences are you not but a single people? Look at the constant change which everything in this universe is undergoing, the making and unmaking the creation and re-creation of all things, the course of which does not stop for a single instant : is there not a uniform law discernible in this? If, in fact, you clearly observe uniformity in diversity in nature, do you not see therein a clear sign of the Unity of the Maker? Then look to the incontestible evidence of human nature, how even when believing in the plurality of gods, it recognizes a unity in the very plurality, and thus bears testimony to the oneness of God. Again, turn over the pages of the sacred scriptures of all religions, search out the teachings of the great spiritual guides of all nations ; they will all testify to the oneness of the Divine Being. In short, the laws of nature, the nature of man, and the testimony of the righteous men of all ages declare with one voice the Unity of God, and this is the cardinal doctrine of the spiritual teachings of the faith of Islam.

Divine revelation

The second fundamental principle of faith in the Islamic religion is belief in the Divine revelation, not only a belief in the truth of the revealed Word of God as found in the Qur'an, but a belief in the truth of Divine revelation in all ages and to all nations of the earth. Divine revelation is the basis of all revealed religions, but the principle is accepted subject to various limitations. Some religions consider revelations to have been granted to mankind only once ; others look upon it as limited to a particular people ; while others still close the door of revelation after a certain time. With the advent of Islam we find the same breadth of view introduced into the conception of Divine revelation as in the conception of the Divine Being. The Qur'an recognizes no limit of any kind to Divine revelation, neither in respect of time nor in respect of the nationality of the individual to whom it may be granted. It regards all people as having at one time or other received Divine revelation. For without the assistance of revelation from God no people could have ever attained the communion with God, and hence it was necessary that Almighty God, Who, being the Lord of the whole world, supplied all men with their physical necessities, should have also brought to them His spiritual blessings. In this case, too, Islam, while sharing with other faiths the belief in the fact of Divine revelation, refuses to acknowledge the existence of any limitations as regards time or place. The fact that the Qur'an speaks of the Prophet Muhammad as the last prophet is not inconsistent with this view ; for it is not the phenomenon of God's talking to His "friends" but the granting of the prophetic revelation in the form of a revealed book that has been definitely discontinued after the Prophet Muhammad, who was the last prophet to receive it.

There is also another aspect of the Islamic belief in Divine revelation in which it differs from some other religions of the world. It refuses to acknowledge the incarnation of the Divine Being. That the highest aim of religion is communion with God is a fact universally recognized. According to the Qur'an, this communion is not

¹ The Qur'an uses the word *Bari* for Maker, which signifies, especially, the Maker of souls, as distinct from the Creator of matter.

attained by God assuming a human shape in the sense of incarnation, but by man rising gradually towards God by spiritual progress and the purification of his life from all sensual desires and low motives. The perfect one who reveals the face of God to the world is not the Divine Being in human form, but the human being whose person has become a manifestation of the Divine attributes by his own personality having been consumed in the fire of love of God. His example serves as an incentive and is a model for others to follow. He shows by his example how a mere mortal can attain to communion with God. Hence the broad principle of Islam that no one is precluded from attaining communion with God and from being fed from the source of Divine revelation, and that anyone can attain it by following the right way.

Life after death

Belief in a future life, in one form or another, is also common to all religions of the world, and it is the third fundamental article of a Muslim's faith. The mystery of the life after death has, however, nowhere been solved so clearly as in Islam. The idea of a life after death was so obscure till as late as the appearance of the Jewish religion that not only is there not much of it found in the Old Testament, but an important Jewish sect actually denied any such state of existence. This was, however, due to the fact that much light was not thrown upon it in earlier revelation. The belief in transmigration was also due to the undeveloped mind of man mistaking spiritual realities for physical facts. In Islam the idea reached its perfection, as did other important fundamental principles of religion. Belief in a future life implies the accountability of man in another life for actions done in this. The belief is no doubt a most valuable basis for the moral elevation of the world if properly understood. The following points are particularly laid stress on by the Qur'an.

Life after death is only a continuation of the life below

The gulf that is generally interposed between this life and the life after death is the great obstacle in the solution of the mystery of the hereafter. Islam makes that gulf disappear altogether: it makes the next life as only a continuation of the present life. On this point the Qur'an is explicit. It says: "We have (in this very life) bound the consequences of a man's deeds about his neck, and (these hidden consequences) We will bring to light on the day of resurrection in the form of a book wide open" (17:13). And again it says: "He who is blind in this life shall also be blind in the next life — nay he shall be straying farther off from the path" (17:72). And elsewhere we have: "O soul at rest! Return to thy Lord, well-pleased, well-pleasing; so enter among My servants and enter My Garden" (89:27-30). The first of these three verses makes it clear that the great facts which shall be brought to light on the day of resurrection shall not be anything new, but only a manifestation of what is hidden from the physical eye here. The life after death is, therefore, not a new life, but only a continuation of this life, bringing its hidden realities to light. The other two quotations show that a hellish and a heavenly light both begin in the world. The blindness of the next life is hell, but according to the verse quoted only those who are blind here shall be blind hereafter, thus making it clear that the spiritual blindness of this life is the real hell, and from here it is carried along to the next life. Similarly, it is the soul that has found perfect peace and rest that is made to enter into paradise

at death, thus showing that the paradise of the next life is only a continuation of the peace and rest which a man enjoys spiritually in this life. Thus it is clear that, according to the Qur'an, the next life is a continuation of this, and death is not an interruption but a connecting link, a door that opens upon the hidden realities of this life.

Spiritual state in this life

With Islam, the most significant truth with regard to the next life has been brought to light. In the Christian teaching the corporal and the spiritual are melted together, the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth and the quenchless fire as the punishment of the wicked are spoken of in the same breath with the kingdom of heaven, the treasure in heaven and the life eternal as the reward of the righteous, but there is no clear indication as to the sources of the one or the other. The Qur'an, on the other hand, makes it clear that the state after death is a complete representation, a full and clear image, of our spiritual state in this life. Here the good or bad conditions of the deeds or beliefs of a man are latent within him, and their poison or panacea cast its influence upon him only secretly, but in the life to come they shall become manifest and clear as daylight. The shape which our deeds and their consequences assume in this very life is not visible to the eye of man in this life, but in the next life it will be unrolled and laid open before him in all its clearness. The pleasure and pains of the next life, therefore, though spiritual in reality, will not be hidden from the ordinary eye as spiritual facts are in this life. It is for this reason that while on the one hand the blessings of the next life are mentioned by physical names as an evidence of their clear representation to the eye, they are on the other hand spoken of as things which "The eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of them". This description of the blessings of the next life is really an explanation given by the Prophet himself of the verse of the Qur'an which says: "No soul knows the blessings and joys which have been kept secret for it" (32:17).

The following verse of the Qur'an, which may ordinarily be misunderstood, is far from describing the heavenly blessings as being identical with the things of this world. It runs thus: "Bear glad tidings to those who believe and do good that they shall have gardens in which rivers flow. As often as they are made to taste of the fruits thereof, they shall say, 'These are the fruits which we were made to taste formerly; and they shall be given the like of it'" (2:25). Now the fruits which the righteous are made to speak of as having tasted in this life could not possibly be the fruits of trees or the things of this life. The verse, in fact, tells us that those who believe and do good works prepare a paradise with their own hands for themselves, with their good deeds for fruits. It is of the fruits of this garden that they are spiritually made to taste here, and of the same, only in a more palpable form, shall they eat in the next life. To the same effect we may quote another verse of the Qur'an: "On that day thou shalt see the faithful men and the faithful women, their light running before them and on their right hands" (57:12). This verse shows that the light of faith by which the righteous men and women were guided in this life, and which could here be seen only with the spiritual eye, shall be clearly seen going before the believers on the day of resurrection.

As in the case of the blessings of paradise, the punishment of hell is also an image of the spiritual tortures of his

life. Hell is said to be a place where one shall neither live nor die (20 : 74). It should be remembered in this connection that the Qur'an describes those who walk in error and wickedness as dead and lifeless, while the good, it calls living. The secret of this is that the means of the life of those who are ignorant of God being simply eating and drinking and the satisfaction of physical desires, are entirely cut off at their death. Of spiritual food they have no share, and therefore, while devoid of true life, they shall be raised again to taste of the evil consequences of their evil deeds.

Belief in angels and its significance

I have now briefly indicated the three fundamental principles of a Muslim's faith, but I may further add that belief in the unseen also includes a belief in those agencies which we call angels. This belief, though common to many religions, is not as widely accepted as the three principles explained above, and therefore a few remarks relating to the truth underlying this belief will not be out of place here. In the physical world we find it as an established law that we stand in need of external agents notwithstanding the faculties and powers within us. The eye has been given to us to see things, and it does see them, but not without the help of external light. The ear receives the sound, but independently of the agency of air it cannot serve that purpose. Man therefore essentially stands in need of something besides what is within him, and as in the physical, so also in the spiritual world. Just as our physical faculties are not by themselves sufficient to enable us to attain any object in the physical world without the assistance of other agents, so our own spiritual powers cannot by themselves lead us to do good or evil deeds, but here, too, intermediaries which have an existence independent of our internal spiritual powers are necessary to enable us to do good or evil deeds. In other words, there are two attractions placed in the nature of man : attraction to good or to rise up to higher spheres of virtue, and the attraction to evil, or to stoop down to a kind of low, bestial life ; but to bring these attractions into operation external agencies are needed, as they are needed in the case of the physical powers of man. The external agency which brings the attractions to good into work is called an angel and that which assists in the working of the attraction to evil is called the devil. If we respond to the attraction for good we are following the Holy Spirit, and if we respond to the attraction for evil we are following the *Satan*. The real significance of belief in angels is, therefore, that we should follow the inviter to good or the attraction for good which is placed within us.

Significance of belief

The above remarks explain not only the significance of a Muslim's belief in angels, but also the meaning underlying the very word "belief". Belief according to Islam is not only a conviction of the truth of a given proposition, but is essentially the acceptance of a proposition as basis for action. As already shown, the proposition of the existence of the devils is as true as that of the existence of the angels ; but while belief in angels is again and again mentioned as part of a Muslim's faith, nowhere are we required to believe in the devils. Both facts are equally true, and the Qur'an speaks on numerous occasions of the misleadings and insinuations of the devils, but while it requires a belief in the angels, it does not require a belief in the devils. If belief in angels were only an equivalent to an admission of their existence, a belief in devils was an equal necessity. But it is not so. The reason is that whereas man is required to

accept and follow the call of the inviter to good, he is required not to follow the call of the inviter to evil, and, therefore, as the former gives a basis for action which the latter does not, we believe in the angels but not in the devils. On the other hand the Qur'an requires a disbelief in the devils : "Therefore he who disbelieves in the devils and believes in God has surely laid hold on the firmest handle" (2 : 257). It would thus be seen that the principles of belief enumerated above as given in the Qur'an are really principles, each of which serves as a basis for action, and no other belief is known to Islam.

Principles of action

Next we take the practical side of the faith of Islam. As I have already said, in Islam actions are as essentially a component part of religion as belief. In this respect Islam occupies a middle position between religions which have ignored the practical side altogether and those which bind their followers to a very minute ritual. It sees the necessity of developing the faculties of man by giving general directions, and then leaves ample scope for the individual to exercise his judiciousness.

Without a strong practical character, any religion is likely to pass into mere idealism, and it will cease to exercise influence on the practical life of man. The precepts of Islam, which inculcate duties towards God and duties towards man, are based on that deep knowledge of the human nature which cannot be possessed but by the Author of that nature. They cover the whole range of the development of man, and are thus wonderfully adapted to the requirements of different peoples. In the Qur'an are found guiding rules for the ordinary man of the world as well as the philosopher, and for communities in the lower grade of civilization as well as the most highly civilized nations of the world. Practicality is the keynote of its precepts, and thus the same universality which marks its principles of faith is met with in its practical ordinances, suiting as they do the requirements of all ages and nations.

Prayer

The verses of the Qur'an which I have quoted above form, as I have already said, the nucleus of the teachings of Islam. Taken in the broadest sense, the two principles of action mentioned in these verses stand for the fulfilment of man's duties towards God and his duties towards man. Prayer to God is the essence of man's duties towards God. Prayer is an outpouring of the heart's sentiments, a devout supplication to God, and a reverential expression of the soul's sincerest desires before its Maker. In Islam the idea of prayer, like all other religious ideas, finds its highest development. Prayer, according to the Qur'an, is the true means of that purification of the heart which is the only way to communion with God. The Qur'an says : "Recite that which has been revealed to thee of the Book and be constant in prayer for prayer restrains from that which is evil and blamable, and the glorifying of God is surely a great thing" (29 : 45). Islam, therefore, enjoins prayer as a means of the moral elevation of man. Prayer degenerating into mere ritual, into a lifeless and vapid ceremony gone through with insincerity of heart, is not the prayer enjoined by Islam. Such prayer is expressly denounced : "Woe to the praying ones who are careless in their prayers, and who make only a show" (107 : 4-6).

Fasting

Fasting is also enjoined by the Qur'an as a means to the purification of the soul. Fasting, however, does not mean

abstaining from food only, but from every kind of evil. In fact, abstention from food is only a step to make a man realize that if he can, in obedience to God, abstain from that which is otherwise lawful, how much more necessary is it that he should abstain from the evil ways which are forbidden by God! That moral elevation is the object of this institution is clearly stated in the Qur'an, which says: "Fasting has been enjoined upon you . . . that you may learn to guard yourselves against evil" (2 : 183).

Pilgrimage

The pilgrimage to Mecca represents the last stage in spiritual advancement. It represents the stage in which all the lower connections of man are entirely cut off and, completely surrendering himself to Divine will, he sacrifices all his interests for His sake. The true lover finds his highest satisfaction in sacrificing his very heart and soul for the beloved one's sake, and the circuit round the house of God is an emblem of external manifestation of it. The pilgrim shows by the external act of making a circuit round the Ka'ba that the fire of Divine love has been kindled within his heart, and like the true lover he makes circuits round the house of his beloved one. He shows, in fact, that he has given up his own will and completely surrendered it to that of his beloved Master, and that he has sacrificed all his interests for His sake.

It will thus be seen that all these Islamic precepts are only meant for the moral elevation of man. Islam does not lay down any institution which may be said to be a meaningless worship of God, the aim and object of all the precepts it gives is the purification of the heart, so that thus purified man may enjoin communion with the Holy One Who is the Fountainhead of all purity.

Man's duties to man

The second branch of the Islamic precepts relates to man's duties towards man, but it should be borne in mind that both kinds of precepts are very closely inter-related. The moral elevation of man is the grand theme of the Qur'an and the chief object which Islam has in view throughout; and all its precepts are only meant to raise humanity step by step to the highest moral elevation to which man can attain. "The person who violates his brother's right is not a believer in the Unity of God" is a teaching which deserves to be written in letters of gold.

The Brotherhood of Islam

In the first place, Islam abolishes all invidious distinctions. "Surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is he who is the most righteous of you" sounds the death-knell of all superiority or inferiority based on rigid caste and social distinctions. Mankind is but one family according to the Qur'an, which says: "O you men! Surely We have created you all of a male and a female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the noblest among you in the sight of God is he who is the most careful of his duties" (49 : 13). Islam thus lays down the basis of a vast brotherhood in which all men and women, to whatever tribe or nation or caste they may belong and whatever be their profession or rank in society, the wealthy and the poor, have equal rights, and in which no one can trample upon the rights of his brother. In this brotherhood all members should treat each other as members of the same family. The slave is to be clothed with the clothing and fed with the food of his master, and he is not to be

treated as a low or vile person. "Your wives," says the Qur'an, "have rights against you as you have rights against them" (2 : 228). No one is to be deprived of any right on the score of his caste or profession or sex. And this great brotherhood did not remain a brotherhood in theory but became an actual living force by the noble example of the Prophet and his worthy successors and companions. The strict rule of brotherhood is laid down in the following words of the Prophet: "No one of you is a believer in God until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself."

Respect for authority

But while thus establishing equality of rights, Islam teaches the highest respect for authority. The home is the real nursery in which the moral training of man begins, and therefore the Qur'an lays the greatest stress upon obedience to parents. Here is one of the passages of the Qur'an: "And your Lord has commanded that you shall not serve others than Him, and that to your parents you should do good; if either or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them so much as 'ugh', nor chide them, and address to them generous words. And lower to them the wing of humility out of compassion, and say, 'O Lord, have compassion on them as they brought me up when I was little'" (17 : 23-24). It is elsewhere said that they should be disobeyed only if they compel one to serve others than God. This high reverence for parents is the basis from which springs up the high moral of respect for all authority. And thus the Qur'an plainly says: "Obey God and the Messenger and those in authority from among you" (4 : 59). By those in authority are meant not only the actual rulers of a country, but all those who are in any way entrusted with authority. It has been remarked by the Prophet: "Every one of you is a ruler and every one of you shall be questioned about those among whom he is in authority". According to a tradition of the Prophet, even if a Negro slave is placed in authority, he must be obeyed. But when authority requires obedience against the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*,² it is not to be obeyed. As the parents are to be disobeyed when they compel one to serve others than God, so an authority must be disobeyed when its orders conflict with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. The first Caliph, Abu Bakr, laid down a rule at the time of his succession which must be written in letters of gold: "If I go aright, help me, but if I err, *correct me*." "Obey me," continued he, "so long as I obey God and His Messenger, but when I disobey God and His Messenger, *I am not to be obeyed*." "One of the most meritorious deeds," observed the Prophet, "is to address a word of remonstrance to a tyrannical ruler."

Charity

Equality of rights and the highest respect for authority are thus the basic principles of Muslim society, and I cannot here enter into the vast details of the superstructure raised on this foundation. But I should note one more peculiarity of the brotherhood of Islam. Every religion of the world has preached charity and the giving of alms, but it is in Islam only that it has been made obligatory and binding upon all those who accept the Muslim faith. Here we have a brotherhood into which the rich man cannot enter unless and until he is willing to give a part of his possession for the support of the poorer members of the brotherhood. There is no doubt that the rich man is not here confronted with the insuperable difficulty of the ideal test of the camel

² An Arabic word meaning the practice of the Prophet Muhammad.

passing through the eye of the needle, but he is subjected to a practical test which not only makes him stand on the same footing with his poorest brother, but also requires him to pay a tax — a tax which is levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor. Everyone who possesses property above a certain limit is required to set apart a stated portion thereof. The portion so set apart should be collected by the Muslim State or the *Imam* (ruler), and objects to which it must be devoted are enumerated in the following verse: "The alms are only for the poor, and the needy, and the officials appointed over them, and those whose hearts are made to incline to truth, and the ransoming of captive and those in debt, and in the way of God, and the wayfarer" (9:60). The words *way of God* include every charitable purpose. Besides the contributions the payment of which has thus been made obligatory by the Qur'an, and made as compulsory as the sayings of prayers, general charity is inculcated very forcibly throughout the Holy Book. Freeing the slaves and feeding the poor are again and again described to be deeds of the highest virtue. For instance, the Qur'an says: "What shall make thee know what the great step is? It is to free the captive, or feed in time of famine an orphan who is a kin, or a poor man who lies in the dust" (90:12-16).

Scope of moral teachings

The Qur'an was not meant for one people or one age, and accordingly the scope of its moral teachings is as wide as humanity itself. It is a Book which offers guidance to all men in all conditions of life, to the ignorant savage as well as to the wise philosopher, to the man of business as to the recluse, to the rich as well as to the poor. Accordingly, while giving varied rules of life, it appeals to the individual to follow the best rules which are applicable to the circumstances under which he lives. If it contains directions on the one hand which are calculated to raise men in the lowest grades of civilization and to teach them the crude manners of society, it also furnishes rules of guidance to men in the highest stages of moral and spiritual progress. High ideal

moral teachings are no doubt necessary to the progress of man, but only those who can realize those ideals will be able to benefit by them. But to this class do not belong the vast masses in any nation or community, however high may be its standard of civilization. Hence the Qur'an contains rules of guidance for all the stages through which man has to pass in the onward march from the condition of the savage to that of the highly spiritual man. They cover all the branches of human activity and require the development of all the faculties of man. Islam requires the display of every quality that has been placed in man, and makes only one limitation, viz., that it should be displayed on the proper occasion. It requires a man to show meekness as well as courage, but each on its proper occasion. It teaches forgiveness, but at the same time it requires that when the nature of an offence requires punishment, punishment proportionate to the crime must be administered. It says, "Forgive when you see that forgiveness would be conducive to good."

Again, it teaches men to display high morals under the most adverse circumstances, to be honest even when honesty is likely to lead one into complications, to speak truth even when one's truthful statement is against those nearest and dearest to one, to show sympathy even at the sacrifice of one's own interest, to be patient under the hardest afflictions, to be good even to those who have done evil. At the same time it teaches the middle path; it teaches men to exercise the noble qualities which have been placed in their nature by God while transacting their own affairs. It does not inculcate severance from one's worldly connections; it requires men to be chaste, but not by castration; it requires them to serve God, but not as monks; it enjoins them to spend their wealth, but not in such a manner as to sit down "blamed and straitened in means"; it teaches them to be submissive, but not by losing self-respect; it exhorts them to forgive but not in such a manner as to embolden culprits; it allows them to exercise all their rights, but not so as to violate others; and last of all it requires them to preach their own religion, but not by abusing others.

THE BIRTHDAY OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

Continued from page 4

a fuller and better presentation of their case to the rest of the world. Will they be able to turn to the life of Muhammad and by sifting the universal in it from the particular discover moral principles which make a creative contribution to the present world situation? Or, if this is too much to expect, will they at least be able to show that Muhammad's life is one possible exemplification of the ideal man in the unified world morality? If they make a good case, there are some Christians who will be ready to listen to them and to learn whatever is to be learned.

"The difficulties confronting Muslims, however, are immense. A combination of sound scholarship and deep moral insight is essential, and this combination is rare. I will not

conceal my personal view that Muslims are unlikely to be successful in their attempt to influence world opinion, at least in the sphere of morals. (Italics ours.—Ed., I.R.). In the wider sphere of religion they have probably something to contribute to the world, for they have retained emphasis—on the reality of God, for example—which have been neglected or forgotten in important sections of the other monotheistic religions; and I for one gladly acknowledge my indebtedness to the writings of a man like al-Ghazali. Towards convincing Christian Europe that Muhammad is a moral exemplar, however, little, indeed nothing, has so far been accomplished."

The duty of the Muslim world is clear.

THE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT IN EARLY ISLAM

Three most important pillars—The Qur'an and its *Tafsir* (Exegesis), the Hadith and the Tashri' (Legislatum)

By AFZAL IQBAL

It is clear¹ that religion exercised a strong cultural influence and ushered in an era of renaissance. It created a dynamic unity but for which the Arabs would not have emerged from the isolation of their tribal life. Both Arabs and non-Arabs who embraced Islam naturally made an effort to read and understand the Qur'an. This was supplemented with the collection of the Hadith for the precept of the Prophet Muhammad was by far the best commentary on the Qur'an which was revealed to him. Religious knowledge, therefore, covered not only the Qur'an and the Hadith but went further into the fields of biography and jurisprudence. Not only that. Islam did not recognize any division between the secular and the spiritual; it sought to govern and guide the conduct of man in all its fields of activity. It was inevitable, therefore, that religious activity which was not confined to the Church as it is understood in the West, was reflected in all the phases of contemporary intellectual life. We have elsewhere dealt in some detail² with the influence of Islam on literature, philosophy and life in general, but in these few pages we propose to confine ourselves to the three most important pillars of the religious movement, viz., the Qur'an and its *Tafsir* (exegesis), the Hadith, and finally the *Tashri'*, or legislation, i.e., the art of interpreting the Qur'an and the Hadith with a view to arriving at a decision about given laws at a given time.

The Qur'an and its Tafsir

Those who read the Qur'an often fail to remember that it was not revealed to the Prophet Muhammad at one time in the present form which is so familiar to us. The Book was revealed over a period of about twenty years. Every verse has a relationship to a known historical event which called for the revelation. The scattered verses, although not collected in one volume during the lifetime of the Prophet, were recorded on various kinds of materials by different scribes at the command of the Prophet. Besides the written record the Qur'an was committed to memory by the Prophet Muhammad and a large number of his contemporary Muslims. The first Caliph, Abu Bakr, ordered the collection of all the written record. He also caused the portions which had been committed to memory by different people to be reduced to writing. All these manuscripts were collected under the supervision of Zayd Ibn Thabit, the chief scribe of the Prophet. This valuable record was kept in the personal custody of Abu Bakr. With his death the manuscripts came in the custody of his successor, 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab, and after him the records were found with Hafsa, the daughter of 'Umar. The third Caliph, 'Uthman, appointed a board of directors, among whom were famous Companions like Zayd Ibn Thabit, 'Abdullah Ibn Zubayr and Sa'd Ibn al-'As. This board undertook to collect all the material in a single volume. Many copies were made and distributed to different parts of the empire. With the final preparation

of the authentic version of the Qur'an all other versions in the custody of individuals were ordered to be destroyed so that no confusion could be caused.

The Qur'an was revealed in Arabic except for a few words which had been Arabicized from other languages and were current during this period. The vocabulary of the Qur'an is purely Arabic. It is natural that the book which sought to address the Arabs in the first instance should be revealed in their language and should adopt expressions which were understood by the audience at which it was directed. "Had we sent this as a Qur'an in a language other than Arabic, they would have said: Why are not its verses explained in detail? What! A book not in Arabic and a messenger in Arabia?"³ Even though the book was in Arabic, which was the language of the Arabs, it does not follow that all that it contained was understood in all its implications by the Arabs. Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406 C.E.) is certainly not right in suggesting that the Qur'an, whose language and way of eloquence was in accordance with the way of Arabia, was fully understood by the Arabs.⁴ This is a fallacious argument. Not every book in every language can be understood by all who speak that language. Understanding of a book requires more than the mere proficiency in speaking it. Although Arabic was the mother tongue of the Arabs, to whom it was addressed, it cannot be said with any measure of accuracy that they understood the import and significance of all the chapters of the Qur'an. The understanding of individuals is strictly in proportion to their cultural circumstances and intellectual attainments. It would be a tall claim if the contemporary Arab suggested that he understood all the words used in the Qur'an, for one does not find every individual in a nation who understands all the vocabulary of his language. We have scores of instances on record to show that eminent Companions with a high reputation for learning and scholarship failed, on occasions, to understand the meanings of some words in the Qur'an and referred them to the Prophet for guidance. If that was the condition of the learned Companions one can imagine the capacity of the common man to grasp the mere meaning, let alone the significance and all the implications, of a given verse. In addition to this difficulty, which is common to all languages, there are a number of idioms used in the Qur'an which defied understanding at the very beginning. To mention a few representative examples:

wa 'l-'Aadiyaat dhabhan⁵

(By the (steeds))

That run, with panting (breath)).

w' al-Zaariyaati zarwan⁶

(By the (winds))

That scatter (broadcast)).

It was not clear in the beginning as to what was meant by the ten nights in chapter 79 or by *Laylah al-Qadr*, the

night of power, in chapter 97. There were numerous ambiguities of this nature which had to be comprehended. There were many references both to the Bible and the Torah, the knowledge of which could not be taken for granted with the knowledge of the Arabic language. There were many allegorical references and the Qur'an itself supports the view that the mere knowledge of the Arabic language is not enough to grasp the full significance of the message :

“He it is Who has sent down
To thee the Book :
In it are verses
Basic or Fundamental
(Of established meaning) ;
They are the foundation
Of the Book : others
Are allegorical. But those
In whose hearts is perversity follow
The part thereof that is allegorical,
Seeking discord and searching
For its hidden meanings,
But no one knows
Its hidden meanings except God
And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge.”

The important fact must be emphasized that it is enough for the common man to content himself with the fundamental verses of the Qur'an which are clear and about which there is no ambiguity whatever.

The Companions did not learn or commit the Qur'an to memory at one time. They learnt a chapter or a verse at one time and after they had clearly understood it they shifted to another. The Qur'an was, therefore, preserved in parts in the memory of the Companions. People like 'Uthman, 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud and other eminent Companions learnt directly from the Prophet, but they did not learn more than ten verses at a time. We have it on the authority of 'Anas Ibn Malik that when a man had read and learnt the two chapters of *al-Baqarah* (the Cow) and *al-Imran* (the Family of 'Imran), he was looked upon as a new and a changed person. Ibn 'Umar spent eight years in studying the second chapter of the Qur'an, The Cow. The major part of the Qur'an consists of clear and unambiguous verses with a determined and an established meaning. These verses relate to do's and don'ts about the fundamentals of religion and were understood by the majority of the people, specially those of an Arab origin. The allegorical verses were, however, understood by the few gifted and learned readers, and to use the words of the Qur'an, by “Those who were firmly grounded in knowledge” (3 : 7). The Companions were naturally at the top of this class, for in addition to their command of the language they had a personal knowledge of the circumstances in which a given verse was revealed. They were, therefore, in an advantageous position where the understanding of the Qur'an was concerned. Even then the understanding varied with their knowledge and cultural trends. Some of them were more well-versed in the literature of the *Jahiliyyah* (the pre-Islamic period), others had the good fortune of spending more time in the company of the Prophet and personally witnessing the events which caused the revelation of certain verses. This is a most pertinent point because an understanding of the events culminating in the revelation of a certain verse places it in a

correct perspective and helps in the interpretation of its application. To give a concrete example : 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab had appointed Qudamah Ibn Ma'dhun as his viceroy in Bahrain. Before the appointment could materialize an allegation was levelled against the viceroy-designate that he had taken wine and had been found drunk. A man as eminent as Abu Hurayrah was cited as a witness. The viceroy-designate was summoned in the presence of the Caliph, who announced his decision to flog him in conformity with the law of the Qur'an. “By God,” said Qudamah, “even if I drank, as is alleged, you have no right to flog me.” The Caliph asked him to cite his defence, at which Qudamah recited the following verses from the Qur'an :

“On those who believe
And do deeds of righteousness
There is no blame
For what they ate,
When they guard themselves
From evil and believe,
And do deeds of righteousness —
(Or) again guard themselves
From evil and do good.”⁸

Qudamah stated that he was one of those who believe and do deeds of righteousness. He claimed that he could cite witnesses to prove that he had participated in the battles of Badr and Uhud and Khandaq. 'Umar asked for a reply from the prosecution. Ibn 'Abbas advanced the plea that the cited verses were revealed in order to pardon and condone the conduct of those in the past before Islam, but to guard against those who will come in the future the Qur'an states :

“O ye who believe !
Intoxicants and gambling,
(Dedication of) stones,
And (divination by) arrows,
Are an abomination,
Of Satan's handiwork.”⁹

The Caliph accepted this plea and punished the viceroy-designate.

The interpretation of the Qur'an began almost simultaneously with the revelation of the Qur'an. This was inevitable because everyone who heard or read the Qur'an was not equipped with the same measure of understanding and the requisite background so necessary for comprehending a verse in its proper perspective. We are told that a man once approached Ibn Mas'ud with a complaint that he had heard somebody explain the following verse from the Qur'an according to his own wont :

“Then watch thou
For the day
That the sky will
Bring forth a kind
Of smoke (or mist)
Plainly visible.”¹⁰

The commentator explained that on the Day of Judgment the people would be engulfed in a cloud of smoke which would block their throats and would make it difficult for them to breathe. Ibn Mas'ud's reaction to this interpretation was that those who knew something might attempt

an interpretation but those who did not should simply say "God knows best".¹¹ The idea underlying this attitude is to discourage unnecessary hair-splitting, for there can be no end to the flight of human imagination in interpreting allegorical parts of the Qur'án, and yet no interpretation of this nature can either be final or correct.

The knowledge of the historical background of a given verse was of great help in a proper understanding of it. This knowledge was confined to a few who were, therefore, in a better position than others to interpret and comment on the meanings of these verses. The Companions of the Prophet who were well versed in the rituals of the Arabs during the Hajj before Islam were at an advantage in understanding and explaining the verses relating to the Hajj and those which dealt with the idols at the Ka'bah. Similarly, the Companions who had some knowledge of the ways of the Jews and Christians in Arabia before Islam were in a better position to understand the verses dealing with the objections of the Jews and Christians to Islam. It will be seen, therefore, that all the Companions were not necessarily an authority in explaining all the Qur'án, but they specialized in a certain part according to their own background, knowledge, circumstances and cultural attainments. The same applied to the generation of scholars who followed the Companions.

Sources of the Tafsir (Exegesis)

A commentary on the Qur'án emanating from the Prophet Muhammad and heard or related by someone is called *al-Manqool*, i.e., heard. It is told, for example, that the Prophet, explaining the expression *al-Salat al-Wusta*¹² occurring in the Qur'án, stated that it denoted the afternoon or *Zuhr* prayers. This then is a commentary on the Qur'án heard from the Prophet and, therefore, accepted universally by the Muslims, and is open to no further interpretation. We can find numerous examples of this category of commentary on the Qur'án in the *Sahih* of al-Bukhari.

All that has been quoted from the Prophet, however, is not universally accepted by all the scholars of Islam. The sources quoting such commentaries are subjected to the severest possible scrutiny; and unless it is proved that the source was wholly authentic the tendency is to reject these quotations as untrue and fabricated. If one were to accept all of them, one will be confronted with a series of contradictions. These contradictions could not have come from the Prophet Muhammad, for he could not have possibly interpreted the same verse in two different ways at the same time. In view of this difficulty there are certain scholars who have gone to the extreme of completely repudiating all commentaries on the Qur'án stated to have emanated from the Prophet Muhammad. We are told that the Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (d. 855 C.E.) stated that there was no basis in epics, stories of campaigns and the *Tafsir*.¹³ The early commentators were not always certain of the material they received and it was not unusual for them to use their own judgment in supplementing their material with a view to making the explanation of a given verse appear plausible. The wealth of commentary thus inherited increased with the passage of time. All works in the early years of Islam were limited to this kind of commentary which was supposed to have been quoted from the Prophet himself.

Another source of the *Tafsir* was personal judgment and study of the Qur'án and the allied subjects. The scholars for example who had a command over the language of the

Arabs, both in the *Jahiliyyah* (pre-Islamic) period and in Islam, who had studied the background and the circumstances leading to the revelation of a verse, and felt competent in applying their knowledge to interpreting or explaining a given verse, could do so without having to quote a commentary from the Prophet. Eminent Companions like Ibn 'Abbas and Ibn Mas'ud followed this method. There could be a difference in individual study and judgment, there could be a difference in the meanings of words and verses and these scholars did not believe that any meaning or interpretation could be declared finally for all times to come by attributing it to the Prophet Muhammad. There were, however, two categories both among the Companions and the generation following them. Some of them believed in complete reserve in pronouncing their judgment and were most reluctant to offer any commentary on the Qur'án. Sa'id Ibn al-Musayyib, for example, would never offer any commentary. Hisham Ibn 'Urwah Ibn al-Zubayr would say that he had not heard his father interpret any words of God's revelation. As against this attitude of a set of Companions there was another category which believed that by maintaining reserve they would be depriving people of the benefit of their knowledge. This group was in a majority and among them were eminent Companions like Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn 'Abbas, 'Ikramah and others. They were willing to explain the meaning of the Qur'án, they were willing to exercise their judgment but they strongly believed that only those who had the necessary qualifications should attempt a commentary of the Qur'án. They would not suffer a person who did not command mastery over the language of the Arabs or who had not thoroughly studied the Qur'án to attempt a commentary. They were also averse to partisan interpretation by followers of religious creeds like the Mu'tazilah or the Shi'ahs, etc.

To try to interpret the Qur'án according to the preconceived prejudice of a given sect is to damage wilfully the spirit of the great Book. This amounted to recasting the Qur'án according to one's own belief — an attitude which would be abhorrent to any sincere student approaching a great book with the only lawful purpose of making an attempt at an objective understanding. It is a matter of deep regret, however, that this attitude of the early Companions was totally lost sight of and efforts were subsequently made to interpret the Qur'án according to one's own preconceived notions. The creed which once created unity in great diversity now gave birth to endless difficulties in interpreting the words of the Qur'án. Anybody who picks up the *Tafsir* of al-Tabari will feel the impact of these difficulties on every page.

The pre-Islamic literature of the Arabs, both poetry and prose, the traditions and ways of living of the Arabs, both in the *Jahiliyyah* (pre-Islamic period) and in Islam, the leading historical events in the life of the Arabs during the *Jahiliyyah* period and Islam, the history of the Prophet's mission, the series of persecutions in Mecca, the conflicts with his adversaries and the subsequent migration to Medina, the campaigns launched by him to defend Islam from the city-State of Medina, the laws promulgated by the Qur'án to weld the tribal bedouins into a united community and brotherhood of Islam — all these served as an essential background to the revelation of various verses which dealt with various situations as they arise from time to time over a period of nearly twenty years. This background and the related historical data was the main source of material for the commentator. The natural curiosity of men provided an incentive to this art. The verses in the Qur'án briefly referred

to incidents and did not go into details. Those who read the references to certain historical events in the Qur'anic verses sought information about the missing links. This provided a rich field for work to the commentator. When someone read, for example, the story of the dog of the Companions of the Cave, he wanted to know the colour of the dog! The story of Moses was briefly mentioned, but what about the details? Who was the young man who was killed by Moses? The story in the Qur'an gives no details. Moses married one of the daughters of the Prophet Shu'ayb, but there are no details. Was she the younger or the elder one? What did she look like? What were the terms of the contract of this marriage? The Qur'an only refers to two terms and gives no details. The relevant verses of the Qur'an run as follows:

"He said: 'I intend to wed
One of these my daughters
To thee, on condition that
Thou serve me for eight years;
But if thou complete ten years,
It will be (grace) from you' (28 : 27).

"He said, 'Be that (the agreement)
Between me and thee,
Whichever of the two terms.
I fulfil, let there be
No ill will to me . . .'" (28 : 28).

The story of the beginning of the creation has been given in the Qur'an so briefly that it does not quench the thirst of a curious student and he must fill in the gaps and look about for details. The Qur'an refers to many a prophet but does not give as much wealth of detail as one would want. This information had, therefore, to be supplemented. Some material could be had in the Torah and its commentaries and the marginal notes. This was not enough. People, therefore, fell back on the store of superstitions which were freely added to the commentaries. Many Jews had embraced Islam and through them much of the wealth of their stories infiltrated into Islam. Even the most learned Companions like Ibn 'Abbas accepted this imperceptible influence. The Prophet had cautiously warned his followers that if the "People of the Book" (the Jews and Christians) related anything to them they should neither believe them nor disbelieve them, but in practice this was not so. Even a person of the prominence of Ibn 'Abbas learnt at the feet of Ka'b al-Ahbar. Here it will be relevant to quote briefly from Ibn Khuldun: "Arabs were not people who had any knowledge or books. They were mostly bedouins and illiterate. If they happened to be eager, like any other human beings, to know something about the reasons of the creation, the beginning of the world or the secrets of the being, they simply asked the people of the book who were cultured much before them and made use of their knowledge." The "People of the Book" were followers of the Torah and *al-Injil* (the Gospels), but the Jews and Christians among the Arabs themselves were as ignorant as the Muslims. They only knew what the masses did. They were mostly from Humayr. At first they embraced Judaism and later they entered the fold of Islam but retained their old original beliefs about the beginning of Creation, etc. Among such people who became Muslims were Ka'b al-Ahbar, Wahb Ibn Munabbih, 'Abdullah Ibn Salaam. Most of the *Tafsirs* abound with what they brought to Islam. The com-

mentators tolerated this kind of knowledge emanating from the Jewish converts to Islam and included it in their works.¹⁴

Contemporary commentators

The Companions of the Prophet did not as a rule interest themselves in a *Tafsir* of the Qur'an. Most of the commentary which is alleged to have emanated from the Companions belong to the period after 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas and Ubayy Ibn K'ab. Some commentary is also attributed to Sa'id Ibn Thabit, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari and 'Abdullah Ibn Zubayr. We will, however, speak about the first four Companions, to whom most of the commentary is attributed. No doubt they were eminently fit to comment on the Qur'an in view of their command of the Arabic language, their long association with the Prophet Muhammad and their intimate knowledge of the circumstances in which various verses of the Qur'an were revealed. They were not reluctant to express their personal opinion and were willing to exercise their instructed judgment. In the order of merit, so far as the commentary on the Qur'an is concerned, these Companions could be ranked as follows: (1) 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas, (2) 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, (3) 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, and (4) Ubayy Ibn K'ab.

To 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib and 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas a lot more has been attributed than to the other two. The reason is simple. 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib and 'Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas were members of the Prophet's family, and anything which is attributed to them becomes doubly more credible in the eyes of the layman, who looks upon the great Companions with reverence and respect on account of their long and intimate association with the Prophet. In the case of 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, his partisans, in order to exaggerate the virtues of their hero, have attributed a great bulk of commentary which is open to grave doubt. Ibn 'Abbas also suffered a disadvantage inasmuch as he was the grandfather of the Abbases. It was, therefore, the tendency of scholars during the Abbaside period to glorify the ancestors of the dynasty by attributing all kinds of qualities to him. The mass of material which is attributed to the two personalities is so confused and confusing that it becomes difficult to sift the grain from the chaff. We will quote two examples to bring home to the reader the difficulty of an objective student who is confronted with wild and enthusiastic exaggeration at every step.

Ibn Abi Jamrah quotes 'Ali as saying: "Had I wanted I could have written the *Tafsir* on the verses of the chapter of the Qur'an-on 70 camel loads of paper". We are further told that Abi al-Tufayl heard 'Ali speaking in public. He made the following claim in a part of his speech quoted by al-Tufayl: "Ask me! By God, there is no verse (in it) which I do not know. No matter whether it was revealed by day or by night, whether it was revealed in a plain or on a mountain." Similar material is attributed to Ibn 'Abbas, who is quoted as having interpreted every verse of the Qur'an, sometimes more than once in each case. The narrators who have attributed this mass of material to these Companions have made the task of a critical student rather difficult, for he has to trace the lineage of the narrators with a view to finding out the authenticity both of the narrator and the narration. The critics hold, for example, that a narration coming through Mua'wiyah Ibn Saleh from 'Ali Ibn Abi Talhah from Ibn 'Abbas was by far the best chain and was nearest the truth. This chain has been followed and accepted by al-Bukhari. A narration of tradition coming through Juwaybah, al-Dhahhaak, from Ibn 'Abbas, is not

considered satisfactory. Ibn al-'Abd al-Hakam is quoted to have said that he heard al-Shafi'i saying that no more than about a hundred quotations attributed to Ibn 'Abbas have proved to be true. This shows the extent to which the enthusiastic followers of these great Companions went in attributing wrong sayings to their heroes. We often come across two contradictory sayings attributed to Ibn 'Abbas. These cannot, in any case, be true. In the *Tafsir* of Ibn Jarir, for example, we find that on a commentary on the following verse of the Qur'an :

"He said : 'Take four birds ;
Tame them to turn to thee ;
Put a portion of them
On every hill, and call to them ;
They will come to thee
(Flying) with speed" (2 : 260)

he quotes an interpretation from Ibn 'Abbas, who is quoted as having said that the verse meant : "Cut the birds into pieces and place those pieces in the four corners of the world — one here, the other there ; then call them and they will, in speed, come to you." But after a few lines we read in the same commentary that Muhammad Ibn Sa'd said : "My father told me that his uncle told him, that his father told him that his father said that Ibn 'Abbas said that the meaning of the Arabic words *Sur Hunaa* in the verse in question was to tie them or to bind them and not to cut them.¹⁵ Here we see Ibn 'Abbas interpreting the Arabic words *Sur Hunaa* as cut them into pieces in one case and

as bind or tie them in another. It is difficult to reconcile this contradiction in the same person. The only explanation is that he has been misquoted. Ibn Jarir's *Tafsir* contains many such examples of obvious contradictions which intrigue the reader.

It must, however, be admitted that the commentaries which were attributed to 'Ali and Ibn 'Abbas had an intrinsic cultural value inasmuch as they provoked thought and discussion. The only exceptionable portion of the affair is the fact of their having been wrongly attributed, but the idea in doing so appears to be to give them authenticity, which was considered so necessary to win the respectful ear of the audience.

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- 1 See *The Islamic Review* for July 1960 and also previous issues dealing with the Cultural Movements in Islam in its early days.
- 2 *Ibid.*
- 3 The Qur'an, 32 : 44.
- 4 *Al-Muqaddimah*.
- 5 The Qur'an, 100 : 1.
- 6 The Qur'an, 52 : 1.
- 7 The Qur'an, 3 : 7.
- 8 The Qur'an, 5 : 96.
- 9 The Qur'an, 5 : 93.
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- 12
- 13 *Al-Itqan*.
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The views of two eminent Frenchmen—Napoleon Bonaparte and de Lamartine

Napoleon Bonaparte (d. 1821 C.E.) says:¹

"Moses has revealed the existence of God to his nation, Jesus Christ to the Roman world, Muhammad to the old continent...."

"Arabia was idolatrous when, six centuries after Jesus, Muhammad introduced the worship of the God of Abraham, of Ishmael, of Moses and of Jesus. The Aryans and some other sects had disturbed the tranquillity of the East by agitating the question of the nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Muhammad declared that there was none but one God Who had no father, no son, and that the Trinity imported the idea of idolatry. . . . He wrote on the frontispiece of the Qur'an, 'There is no god but God.'

"Muhammad was a prince, he rallied his compatriots around him. In a few years the Muslims conquered half of the world. They snatched away more souls from false gods, pulled down more idols, demolished more pagan temples in fifteen years than the followers of Moses and Jesus did in fifteen centuries. Muhammad was a great man. He might have been, in fact, a god, if the revolution which he was instrumental in bringing about had not been prepared by circumstances. When he appeared, the Arabs had been, since many years, afflicted with civil wars. All those nations that have achieved great things have done them when they came out of such ordeals that renewed equally their souls and their bodies. In the battles of Kadesia and (gap in the original MSS.) which enabled the intrepid Muslims to plant the standard of the Prophet on the banks of the Oxus and on the frontiers of China; if those of Ajnadin and Yarmuk, which caused Syria and Egypt to fall under their dominion, were turned against them; if the Khalids, the Zerars and the 'Amrs had been defeated and repelled to their vast deserts, the Arabs would have gone back to their wandering life; they would have lived like their forefathers, poor and miserable; the names of Muhammad, 'Ali and 'Umar would have remained unknown to the world. . . .

"The Parthians, the Scythians, the Mongols, the Tartars and the Turks have generally shown themselves enemies of science and arts, but this reproach cannot be fastened on to the Arabs, no more than upon Muhammad. Mu'aviyah, the first of the Umayyad Caliphs, was a poet; he granted peace to a rabbi because he had prayed for grace in four beautiful Arabic verses. Yezid, his son, was also a poet. The Muslim attached so much value to this art that they regarded it as equal to bravery. Al-Mansur, Harun al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun cultivated art and sciences. They were fond of literature, chemistry and mathematics; they lived with savants, caused the Greek and Latin authors — the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Euclid, etc. — to be translated into Arabic, and founded schools and colleges for medicine, astronomy and moral science. Ahmad corrected the tables of Ptolemy; 'Abbas was a distinguished mathematician; Costa, Alicude, Thabit and Ahmad measured one degree of meridian from Saana to Kufa. Chemistry, alembics, sun-dials, clocks and the numerical signs owe their existence to Arab invention. Nothing is more elegant than their moral tales; their poetry is full of fervour. Muhammad extolled everywhere the savants and such men as devoted themselves to a speculative life and cultivated letters. If the Arabs have neglected anatomy, that was because of a religious prejudice. In the library of Cairo there were 6,000 volumes on astronomy and more than 100,000 on other subjects; in the library of Cordova there were 300,000 volumes. Sciences and arts reigned five hundred years under the Caliphs and made great progress, which was brought to naught by the invasion of the Mongols. . . .

"Muhammad reduced the number of women which one could marry; before him it was indefinite: the rich used to marry a large number of women. He thus restricted polygamy. Women are not born more in number than men; why then is this permission to

man to have more women and why had not Muhammad adopted the law of Jesus in this matter? In Europe the legislators of nations, whether Greek or German, Roman or Gaul, Spanish or British, have never permitted but one wife. Never in the West was polygamy authorized. In the East, on the contrary, it has always been authorized. Since historic times all men, Jews or Assyrians, Arabs or Persian, Tartars or Africans, could have more wives than one. Some have attributed this difference to geographical conditions. Asia and Africa are inhabited by men of various complexions; polygamy is the only effective means to blend them together, so that the white may not persecute the black, nor the black the white. Polygamy makes them born of the same mother or of the same father; the black and the white, being brothers, sit and see each other at the same table. In the East, also, colour does not give one superiority to another. But to fulfil this object Muhammad thought that four wives were sufficient. One may ask how it is possible to permit four wives when there are not more women than men? As a matter of fact polygamy does not exist except among the wealthy class. As it is this class which forms the opinion, the mixture of the colours in these families is sufficient to maintain the union among them.

"If we should like our colonies to give liberty to the black and to get rid of the colour prejudice obtaining in them, our legislators will have to allow polygamy.

"In the East, slavery has never had the same character as in the West; the slavery of the East is like the one which one finds in the Holy Scriptures. The slave inherits his master's property and marries his daughter. The majority of the Pashas had been slaves. Many of the Grand Viziers, of the Mamelukes, 'Ali Ben Mourad Bey, had been slaves. They began their lives by performing the most menial service in the house of their masters and were subsequently raised in status for their merit or by favour. In the West, on the contrary, the slave has always been below the position of the domestic servants; he occupies the lowest rung. The Romans emancipated their slaves, but the emancipated were never considered as equal to the free-born. The ideas of the East and West are so different that it took a long time to make the Egyptians understand that all the army was not composed of slaves belonging to the Sultan al-Kabir (the Great Sultan, i.e., Napoleon). The father of the family is the first magistrate of his house; he has absolute rights over his wives, children and slaves. Never does the public administration meddle with what happens in the internal affairs of a house so as to disturb the authority of the father. His wives are sacred and respected, even in civil wars.

"I hope the time is not far off when I shall be able to unite all the wise and educated men of all the countries and establish a uniform régime based on the principles of the Qur'an which alone can lead men to happiness."

The French historian Alphonse de Lamartine (d. 1860 C.E.) writes:²

"Never has a man set for himself, voluntarily or involuntarily, a more sublime aim, since this aim was superhuman: to subvert superstitions which had been interposed between man and his Creator, to render God unto man and man unto God; to restore the rational and sacred idea of divinity amidst the chaos of the material and disfigured gods of idolatry, then existing. Never has a man undertaken a work so far beyond human power with so feeble means, for he (Muhammad) had in the conception as well as

2 *Histoire de la Turquie*, Paris 1854, Vol. II, pp. 276-277.

1 Bonaparte et *L'Islam*, by Cherfils, Paris, France, 1914, pp. 105-125.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

("We have not sent you (Muhammad) but as a Mercy to (all) the Nations"—The Qur'an 21:107)

AN APPRECIATION OF MUHAMMAD

Muhammad, God's servant, the strong in faith,
Came he from the tribe of Quraish.
An orphan, a parent, a leader was he.
Muhammad the master so good and kind,
His like is very hard to find.
As a partner in marriage none better than he,
O God, help us like him to be.
Muhammad the helpful in the time of need,
Mended many a broken reed of mankind so much in need,
Full of pity love and power,
God was with him every hour.
Muhammad, the conqueror in the days of yore,
Would enter a city, on his captives have pity.
War, he said, was forced on me,
But my captives must go free, and until such times they
can be,
See you heed them, clothe and feed them.

Muhammad a leader was he as all politicians should be,
upright, honest to the core.
Learn ye much from this man of yore.
Women he uplifted from their low degree.
Paradise, said he, lies at the feet of mother.
And of the new-born babes, said he,
Born in sin they cannot be.
Pagans around him everywhere,
Listened to his daily prayer.
Slay not your baby girls, said he,
And also let your slaves go free.
For this, he said, is God's decree,
I beg thee harken unto me.
The day did come the fight was done.
They heard his cry, O God is one.
And lowly too they knelt in prayer,
Saying God is everywhere.

Muhammad all prophets did surpass,
Because God willed him to be the last.
And so to him a book was given.
It is a book so rich and rare,
Where man can find a precious share
Of advice so freely given,
Which for centuries was hidden,
By man's misunderstanding all,
And not listening to God's call.
So through, this book it shall be,
Once again God speaks to thee.

So gather these jewels so rich and rare,
With the likeness of which none can compare.
Jewels for all nations, God is so fair,
Race or colour, knoweth not He,
And that is how we all should be,
If we want world unity.



"The Prophet's Mosque" at Medina, Su'udi Arabia, in whose left-hand corner is situated the mausoleum of the Prophet Muhammad

Muhammad, we would wish us all to listen,
When we hear God's call.
Unity and brotherhood, has not yet been understood :
We are not yet out of the wood ;
Islam is still misunderstood.
Here is your job to be done,
For the whole world must be won and one.

Olive Ahmed-Toto.

AN ASPECT OR TWO OF THE TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

The Prophet Muhammad's concern for suffering humanity overstepped the other cherished ideals of his life

By SAYYID AMJAD HUSAIN

Islam not a religion of ritualism

If we look upon the Prophet Muhammad as a religious personality who preached mere dogmas, then we shall surely be in grave error. In fact, he was more than a religious teacher. His religion is less a religion of ritualism and more a religion of humanism.

The Qur'án declares in unequivocal terms, "Woe to the praying ones, who are unmindful of their prayers, who pray to be seen and withhold alms" (107:4-7). Here "alms" should be taken in its wider meaning. It means the portion for the poor which is to be spent on account of those helpless people who have been lagging behind in the economic race of the nation. Islam has fixed this just due or emolument of the poor at the minimum compulsory rate of 2½ per cent on all savings. In the same chapter the Qur'án has announced in its characteristic force: "Hast thou seen him who belies religion? That is the one who is rough to the orphan and urges not the feeding of the needy" (107:1-3). So according to the Qur'án, to become rough to the orphan and not urge the feeding of the needy is tantamount to unbelief. Then it goes without saying that in the philosophy of Islam the belief in the day of judgment and doing good to the suffering humanity are almost interchangeable; one more quotation and the whole purport of the Qur'án is explicitly revealed: "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteous is the one who believes in God, and the last day, and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and gives away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask and to set captives free and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction in the time of conflict. These are they who are truthful; and these are they who keep their duty" (2:177).

These lines are, so to speak, the definition of the term Muslim. A true Muslim is one who fulfils all the conditions laid down in these verses. To be sure, it is a happy blending of religious belief, ethics and economics. And yet the striking point that will capture the attention of every cautious reader is that in the long list of so many good works the item of prayer has been placed below the act of spending wealth out of love for God for the amelioration of the condition of the suffering humanity. As a matter of fact, prayer is only a means, and nothing more than a means, to attain the great end of life, a mental state having a single spontaneous and uncontrollable desire for service to humanity. Prayer is as the hard shell within which is concealed the tender core of the amazing human nature well disposed to the service of humanity. A serious-minded reader of the Prophet's life will be constrained to admit that his concern for suffering humanity overstepped the other cherished ideals of his life. The Maulana Muhammad 'Ali, a deep student of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, writes in his *The Living Thoughts*

of Muhammad, London 1947: "If there is any one trait of his character which is more marked than another, it is his care of the orphan and the widow, his support of the weak and the helpless, his love of labour and work for the distressed."

Muhammad the greatest of all humanists

We do not know exactly what the modern humanists seek to achieve in the context of the present-day circumstances. If their object is just to humanize the fallen humanity and to install the high principles and sublime virtues in all human hearts, then they should look up to the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be on him!) for inspiration and guidance simply because he was the greatest of all humanists who preached the highest type of humanism. Some of the humane teachings of the Prophet are noted below for the contemplation of those neo-humanists who are sick of all philosophical and political thoughts of modern Europe:

"The best of you are those who have the most excellent morals."

"Help thy brother whether he is the doer of wrong or wrong is done to him. They (his companions) said, 'O Messenger of God! We can help a man to whom wrong is done, but how could we help him when he is the doer of wrong?' He said, 'Take hold of his hands from doing wrong'."

"One who manages the affairs of the widow and the poor man is like the one who exerts himself in the way of God or the one who stands up for prayer in the night and fasts in the day."

"I and the man who brings up an orphan will be in paradise like this (he pointed with his two fingers, the forefinger and the middle finger)."

"Hear and obey although a Negro slave whose head is like a dried grape be appointed to rule over you."

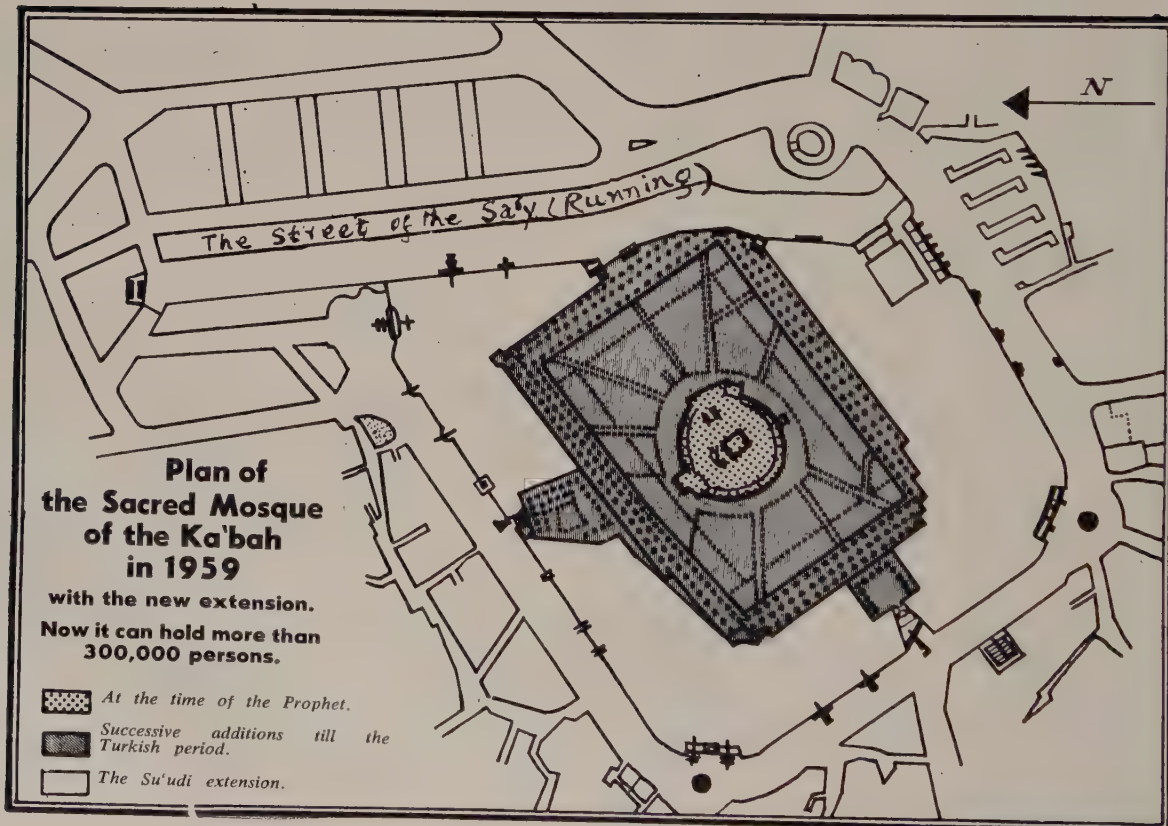
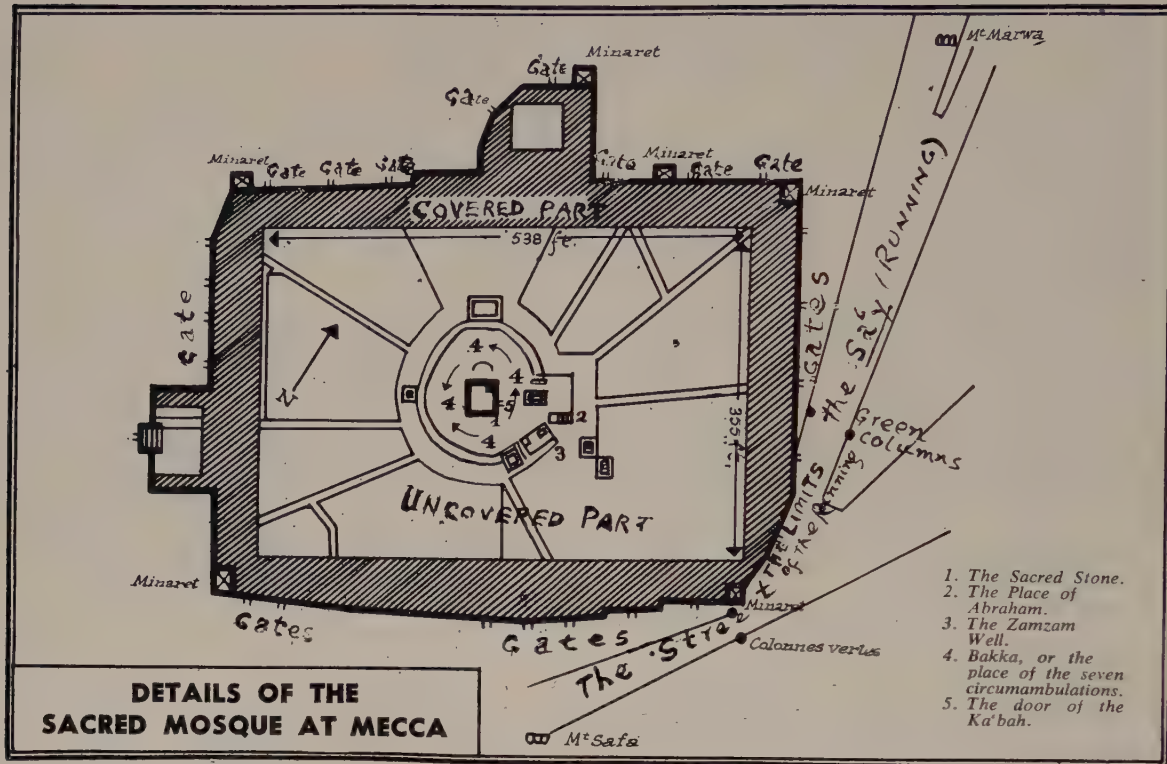
"The most perfect of believers in faith is the best of them in moral excellence and the best of you are the kindest of you to their wives."

These are not the preaching of a theorist. Every item of his teaching was practically demonstrated in his own life. His doings were quite in accord with his sayings and he is the solitary figure known to history who himself was the example of all his precepts. Here lies the uniqueness of his role as an upholder of humanism.

The world of today, as we all know, has been badly distracted by the internecine class wars, racial animosity and the ill-advised malignity affecting the opposite sexes. The sooner, therefore, it appreciates these teachings of the greatest benefactor of mankind and gives his religion an opportunity to play its grand role once again in reconstructing the world order, the better it is for the restoration of international peace and goodwill.

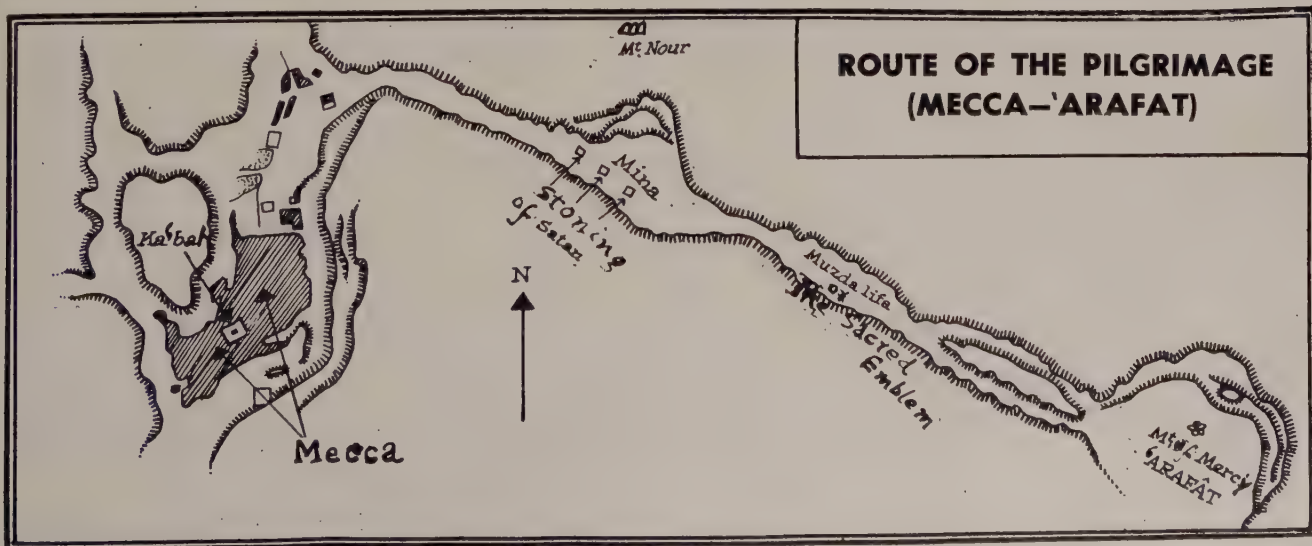
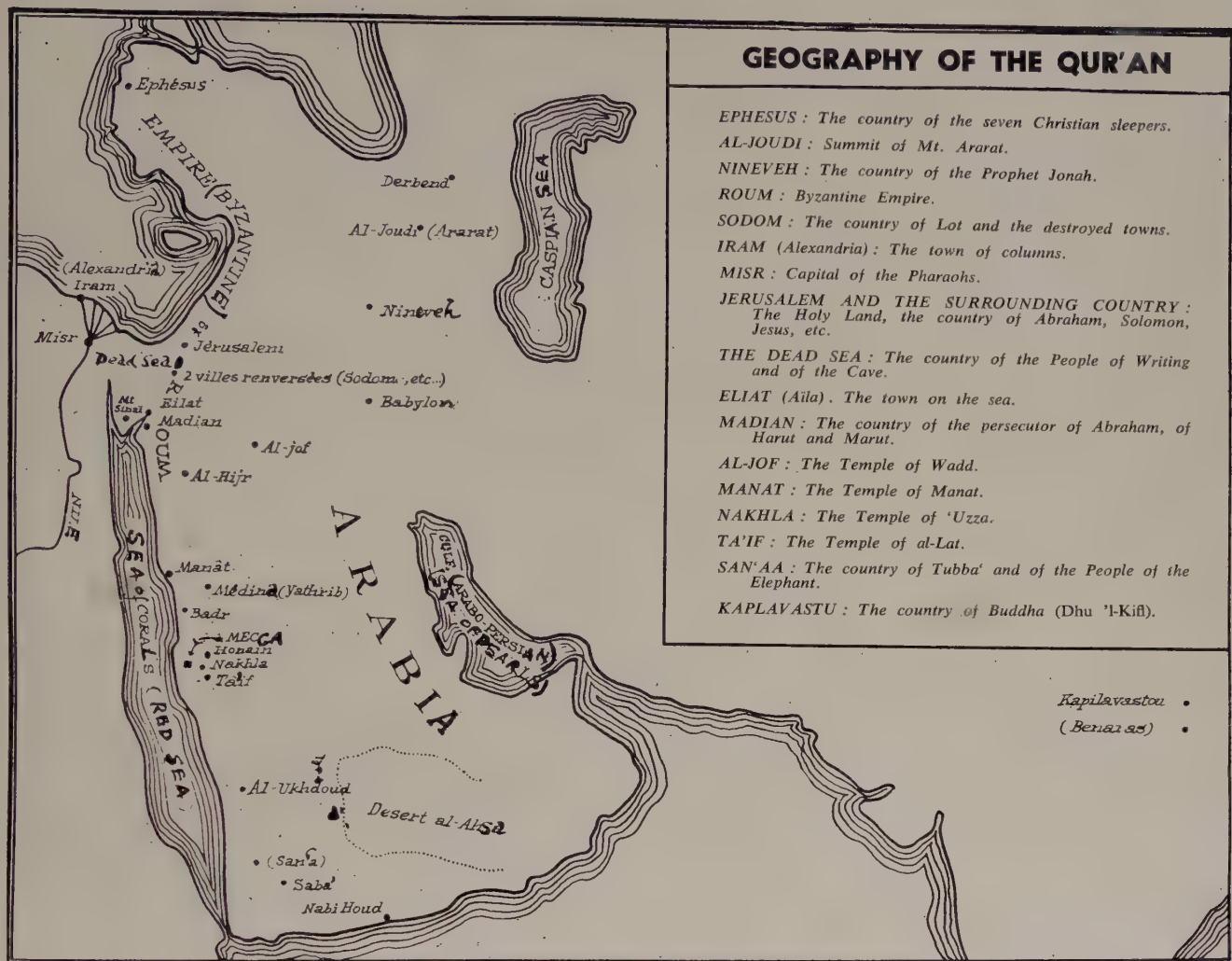
A TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF PLACE

born in April 5



ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

—12th Rabi' al-awwal



EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

Baghdad University

The problem

When the Republic of Iraq was established on 14th July 1958, and its Government turned to face the numerous problems confronting it, and on the solution of which depended the future progress of the country, it found that one of the most vital and pressing of these problems was that of education. In Iraq, as in all the other Arab countries, the need and the demand for education was tremendous. It existed at all levels from that of basic education among the illiterate masses to that of higher technical and university education for the best brains of the country. The people wanted education with a growing and ardent demand. The country needed more and more educated men and women in every field. And what had been done till 1958 was not nearly enough to meet this demand and satisfy this need. It certainly was not enough to enable the country to go forward at the speed required by the changes that were taking place in it and in the modern world to which it wished to belong.

The solution

The Government of the Republic laid down a new educational policy, inspired by the democratic ideals of bringing education to the people as a whole as quickly as possible; of making primary schools accessible to the children of poor parents who could not afford to pay fees; of creating secondary schools to take the increased output of primary schools; and of opening the avenues of higher education to all those who could benefit by it. Education was thus to be expanded simultaneously at every level and in every field, including of course the vocational, to which the Government paid special attention, and the spreading of literacy among adults. The training of teachers was quickly accelerated both inside Iraq and outside it; and what may be called emergency measures were resorted to in making the maximum use of existing school buildings, while waiting for new ones to be erected, by housing two schools in each building on a double shift system. The educational budget (including grants to Baghdad University) was nearly trebled in the two years from 1958 to 1960.

THE UNIVERSITY

Historical summary

Crowning the educational edifice is Baghdad University, which has more than doubled its numbers in the last two years. This great increase has been made possible by the opening of evening courses in some of the University's colleges,¹ and of establishing seven Institutes of Higher Study which do not depend for their intake entirely on the present output of the secondary schools, but recruit many of their students from among those who finished their secondary education in past years and have been working in various employments since, for lack of opportunities for further education. The increase in the number of regular college students is about 15 per cent, which has been amply met by



The Prime Minister of Iraq, Major-General 'Abd al-Karim Qasim, who laid the foundation-stone of the Baghdad University building on 14th July 1959 (the Revolution Day)

an increase of 30 per cent in the teaching staff. Of the 11,618 students now attending the University colleges and institutes, 3,000 are resident.

But apart from growth in numbers, the University has made great strides in the Republican era towards attaining the academic character, status and standards of a full university. To set these advances in their perspective it is necessary to give a brief historical survey of what had been done in the 35 years prior to the Revolution towards establishing a university.

The first beginnings were made in 1923 when the Higher Teachers' Training College was established in a tentative, incomplete form. Thereafter the college was gradually developed and completed until it reached its present form in 1939. Meanwhile the College of Medicine had been formed in 1927 and the College of Pharmacy in 1936. The

THE UNIVERSITY OF BAGHDAD MASTER PLAN



A CENTRAL AREA

- 1 LIBRARY
- 2 ADMINISTRATION
- 3 FACULTY TOWER
- 4 AUDITORIUM
- 5 FACULTY CLUB
- 6 STUDENT CENTER
- 7 MUSEUM
- 8 THEATER
- 9 ART GALLERY

B ACADEMIC BUILDINGS

C DORMITORIES

D DINING HALLS

E ATHLETIC FACILITIES

- 1 ATHLETIC BUILDINGS
- 2 STADIUM

F SERVICE AREA

G HOUSING

- 1 PRESIDENT'S HOUSE
- 2 FACULTY HOUSING
- 3 GUEST HOUSE

H SUPPLEMENTARY BUILDINGS

- 1 MOSQUE
- 2 TANRIK COLLEGE
- 3 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- 4 INFIRMARY
- 5 FACULTY PAVILION
- 6 MAIN ENTRANCE, GATEHOUSE AND ARCH

College of Engineering came into being in 1942, the Tahrir College (for women) in 1946 and the College of Commerce in 1947.

But all these colleges were no more than vocational institutions whose only object was to produce government officials and specialists in certain professions. Their academic standards were therefore not as high as might have been wished; nor did these colleges pay sufficient attention to learning for its own sake in the arts and sciences, nor again did they concern themselves with research and the objective search for truth. In fact, they fell so far short of the required standards that they could scarcely be regarded as having been the true nucleus of the University.

more than a whole year, and only towards the end of 1957 was the first step taken towards putting it into effect, when the first president of the University and five professors (all Iraqis) were appointed as a Founding Council to study the condition of the existing colleges, carry out the necessary changes in their structure and take the required steps to incorporate them in the University once they had attained the necessary academic standards.

Under the Republic

Then came the Revolution of 14th July 1958, and Iraq became a Republic expressing the will of the people. As in other fields where projects had been started but not com-



A panoramic view of Baghdad University when completed. The University project will take 12 years to complete and cost £46,000,000.

The project when complete will give Iraq one of the most splendidly designed universities in the world.

It was not long, however, before the people of Iraq became alive to the need of a real university, and the demand grew so strong that successive governments were compelled to do something to satisfy it. Thus in 1943 a first commission was formed to study and report on the project for establishing a university.

As a result of its recommendations, the College of Arts and Sciences was founded in 1949, and its principal purpose was to give a liberal education in arts and science subjects for its own sake and not to produce professional specialists for work in narrow "applied" fields. Thus the first seed was sown of true university education, and the College of Arts and Sciences may be considered as having been the real nucleus of what is now Baghdad University.

In 1956 the Baghdad University Law was enacted. This law was the foundation stone, so to speak, on which Baghdad University was to be built, but it remained a dead letter for

pleted, it became necessary to study afresh the University project in the light of the needs and aspirations of the new Iraq. A committee was formed which recommended the abrogation of the 1956 law and its replacement by a new one. This new law was enacted before the end of 1958, and in accordance with its provisions the Founding Council was dissolved and replaced by the present University Council, which held its first meeting in November 1958.

The University founded

The most important decision taken at this meeting was the one granting recognition to the University and incorporating in it all existing colleges. The University, as thus constituted, consists now of the following colleges: The College of Medicine, the College of Arts, the College of Sciences, the College of Education, the College of Engineering, the College of Pharmacy, the College of Dentistry, the Tahrir

College (for women), the College of Veterinary Medicine, the College of Agriculture, the College of Law and the College of Commerce.

At the same time the University Council decided to open three Higher Institutes: one for Administration, one for Languages,² and one for Survey; to restart evening courses at the Colleges of Law and Commerce and to open up evening courses at the College of Arts so as to enable it to double its numbers; and to attach to the University the Higher Institute of Industrial Engineering and the Institute of Physical Training.

Since these decisions were taken great progress has been made in implementing them in various directions. New departments have been opened in some of the colleges and

research is as important, in the life of a university that deserves its name, as teaching.

200 new teachers

It is to be noted, however, that the University is still in the process of formation, and that it will require several years to complete it in a manner to satisfy the vision of those who have planned it. Its first and most pressing need is for a great increase in the number of professors and lecturers. To meet this need the authorities in Baghdad are now recruiting, in Britain and other countries, an additional staff of no less than 200, whose qualifications must be either a Ph.D. or M.A. degree. Of the 200, 47 (of whom 12 are from Britain) have been appointed since applications were



The Baghdad University Mosque

the evening courses recommended are already under way. Also, four more new Higher Institutes have been established in addition to those already mentioned, namely the Institutes of Forestry, Accountancy, Natural History and Arid Zones Research, bringing the total number of Higher Institutes to nine. Further, an Oil Institute is to be established next year as part of the College of Engineering.

Simultaneously, a beginning has been made in providing for higher studies leading to the granting of M.A. degrees, and much attention is being given to developing the research side of the University, the Council being convinced that

invited a few months ago, and it is expected that the number of appointments will reach 100 or 120 before the beginning of the new academic year beginning in October 1960.

The University buildings project

The second great need is for new buildings, not only to provide the necessary space, amenities and atmosphere for a modern university, but also to bring together the various colleges of which the University is composed (and which are now housed in different buildings, in many cases at considerable distances from one another) so that it will be

possible to create university life in the social sense and also to facilitate academic intercourse between one college and another in such fields of study as they may have in common.

To achieve this purpose a beautiful site has been selected in Jadriyah suburb, in the southern quarter of Baghdad, on which to erect the new University buildings. This site has the great advantage of being flanked on three of its sides by the River Tigris, so that no matter how much the city may develop and expand it will not submerge the University or become mixed with it. Thus the University will retain its own character and atmosphere and continue

splendidly designed universities in the world. The foundation stone was laid by the Prime Minister, Major-General 'Abdul Karim Qasim, on 14th July 1959. Tenders will be invited shortly for the building contracts and it is hoped that work will commence by the end of this year.

The first buildings to go up will be the library, the lecture halls, the administrative offices block and the boarding houses, which are planned to accommodate eventually 8,000 resident students; and as the physical structure of the University is growing, the academic reforms and developments will be proceeding that are necessary to make the mind and soul of the University worthy of their home. A



The University Auditorium (5,000 persons) and Faculty Tower

to enjoy the peace and quiet necessary to the academic life while, at the same time, enjoying the practical advantage of being near enough to the city for easy communications.

The University building project has been incorporated in the general Development Plan and given high priority by the Government of the Republic. It is to be completed in two stages, the first of which will cost £31,000,000 and will, it is hoped, be completed within six years. The second stage will cost another £15,000,000 and will take another six years to complete. A world-famous architect was selected in the person of Dr. Walter Gropius to design the buildings, and his plans have been completed and approved. They will, as our readers can judge for themselves from the photographs we publish in this article, give Iraq one of the most

beginning has already been made in building up the research and reference library. The sum of £100,000 was provided in last year's budget as a first instalment for this purpose; 100,000 books have already been bought and arrived in Baghdad to form the nucleus of the library, which also already subscribes to 1,000 learned periodicals from all over the world. Four librarians are now being trained in Baghdad by a specialist from the UNESCO, while others are under training in Europe and America.

The University Council is, and will remain, independent of the Ministry of Education, both financially and administratively, so that the University will enjoy the full academic freedom in its internal organization and direction which is necessary to preserve the integrity of learning.



University Entrance Gate — "The Open Mind"

| Colleges | No. of Students | Men | Women | No. of Teachers |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|--------------------|
| 1. Arts - - - | 1,114 | 793 | 321 | 78 |
| 2. Commerce - - - | 1,561 | 1,411 | 150 | 37 |
| 3. Tahrir College (for Women) - - - | 512 | — | 512 | 52 |
| 4. Education - - - | 1,515 | 973 | 542 | 137 |
| 5. Law - - - | 1,747 | 1,577 | 170 | 37 |
| 6. Agriculture - - - | 323 | 315 | 8 | 45 |
| 7. Pharmacy - - - | 237 | 155 | 82 | 19 |
| 8. Medicine - - - | 1,019 | 796 | 223 | 102 |
| 9. Dentistry - - - | 163 | 122 | 41 | 51 |
| 10. Veterinary Science - - - | 115 | 115 | — | 18 |
| 11. Sciences - - - | 444 | 352 | 92 | 71 |
| 12. Architecture - - - | 468 | 450 | 18 | 67 |

*Institutes.**

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-----|
| 1. Physical Training - - | 89 | 89 | — | 18 |
| 2. Industrial Engineering - - | 316 | 316 | — | 25 |
| 3. Languages - - - | 675 | 616 | 59 | 43 |
| 4. Administration - - - | 361 | 324 | 37 | 16 |
| 5. Survey - - - | 110 | 110 | — | 17 |
| 6. Commerce - - - | 813 | 743 | 70 | 25 |
| 7. Forestry - - - | 36 | 36 | — | — |
| Total - | 11,618 | 9,293 | 2,325 | 865 |

REFERENCES

- 1 In Iraq the word "Colleges" is used to describe what would, in England, be called the "schools" of a university.
- 2 Facilities are already provided at this Institute for the study of English, French, Russian, German, Spanish and Chinese. As for the language of instruction in the various colleges, it is either in Arabic or in English, according to the subject and its requirements.
- 3 The Institutes of Accountancy and Arid Zones Research had just been formed when this table was compiled and are not therefore included in it.

PRAYER IN ISLAM

By MUHAMMAD YAKUB KHAN

(Former Imam, The Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England)

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SOME SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS OF THE SELF AND THE QUR'AN

By DAWOOD O. KAJEE

The process of evolution responsible for the major achievements in the course of civilization

Social organization in lower animal groups such as unicellular organisms and insect societies is relatively fixed and rigid as compared to the less firmly knit social organizations as developed among vertebrates.¹ Social life underwent a further progressive evolution in higher vertebrates, the trend towards a more elastic society, free from the limitations of earlier animal life, having developed most markedly in the transition from monkeys and apes to human beings, who are capable of rational thought and independent and modifiable social behaviour.

As human civilization grew and developed, the various members of mankind gained increasing personal variation; wider individual differences in occupation and mode of conduct and behaviour progressively evolved. Whereas primitive communities showed a relative uniformity in respect of the various aspects of life, newer and diverse patterns of social, intellectual and moral activity subsequently unfolded, a lesser and lesser social uniformity thereby having come into existence.²

Such a process of social differentiation, whereby growing emphasis was laid on multiplicity and specialization of task and endeavour, paralleled by the concomitant emergence of greater divergence in patterns of human personality, marked the course of a strengthening of the human self, of the persistent growth and characterization of human individuality, or, that distinctive quality or set of features which distinguishes and characterizes one person from another.

Men of exceptional merit and men who deviated in all or many respects from the general type were brought to bear on the surrounding fold with time. Those were the beings who are said to have been responsible for the major achievements in the course of civilization.³ Upon them have rested the fine pillars of progress in the realm of moral, artistic and intellectual endeavour throughout history.

The progressively enhanced uniqueness of man co-extensive with his spiritual being and creative ability

The drift towards a progressively enhanced uniqueness of the individual has consequently been co-extensive with two intimately related aspects of life in the history of civilization. First, in respect of man's spiritual being and its subsequent evolution, as reflected in the various religious phases via Judaism, through Christianity to Islam. This trend is implicit in the following Qur'anic verses:

"Lo! those who believe (in that which is revealed unto thee, Muhammad), and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabaeans — whoever believeth in God and the Last Day and doth right — surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve" (2 : 62).

"But those who believe in God and His messengers and make no distinctions between any of them, unto them will God give their wages; and God was ever Forgiving, Merciful" (4 : 150).

"And had God so willed, He might have made you all a community uniform in faith, but He wishes to discipline you in what He has given you of His goodness, therefore try to excel in all good things" (5 : 48).

"Surely your strivings are of different kinds" (92 : 4).

And secondly, in relation to the development of human creative ability, as mirrored in the manifold achievements of art and science, whereby man assumes a status of creator — a view fully in conformance with Qur'anic teaching — since the existence of creators other than God is considered possible: "Blessed is God, the best of those who create" (23 : 14).

The intimate relationship between spiritual and scientific development is well crystallized in the words of Einstein:

"The cosmic religious experience is the strongest and noblest mainspring of scientific research".⁴

Marx's comment on individuality

A similar trend of change is depicted by Karl Marx — though in the context of a different ideological approach to problems — in his socio-political comments on individuality:

"As we review history and seek further and further back, the individual — even the producing individual — appears less and less independent. He belongs to a larger unit. First in a natural way to the family, then to the enlarged family, the tribe; later to the different commonwealths which ensued from the conflicts and combinations of the tribes. Only in the 18th century in 'bourgeois society' did the different forms of social relationships appear to the individual as simple means for advancing his private purposes, an external necessity. . . . Man is in strict sense a *zoon politikon*, not only a sociable animal, but an animal which can individualize itself only in society" (*To the Critique*, etc., p. 14).

It is paradoxical, consequently, that the Marxist school of thought should ultimately place the interests of society or the group as far above those of the individual as virtually to annul him to the point of self-negation and self-annihilation:

"The proletariat, during its contest with the bourgeoisie, is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class . . ." (Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, 1 : 228).

"The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organized as the ruling class . . ." (*Ibid.*, p. 227).

In contrast, the Qur'an, whilst stressing a Socialistic approach in human affairs (59 : 7), at the same time affords a delicate social balance by placing the individual personality on a par even with the entire human race:

"He who kills an individual except for murder or treason, it is as if he kills the entire human race; and he who preserves the life of an individual, it is as if he preserves the entire human race" (5:32).

"When life gathers strength from the Self,
The river of Life expands into an ocean" (p. 22).

In realizing the commonness of man Islam also recognizes the uniqueness of every individual

Whilst fully realizing the commonness of man, Islam at the same time provides recognition for the uniqueness of every individual. No sane system of knowledge could ever overlook the oneness of mankind, to which the genesis and history of civilization bears ample testimony and which some recent systems of thought have even over-emphasized to the detriment of the individual, personal value. For when the various members of mankind first assumed a collective social state of living, they of necessity developed a common pattern of culture and tradition which served as a basis for social uniformity and harmonious living. The history of law bears practical testimony to the existence and extension of common social features which bind one human being to another, since large numbers of individuals — in the face of the particular idiosyncrasy of each — became linked through a common acceptance and practice of similar patterns of tradition and codes of law. It is in the fullest realization of this aspect of humanity that the concept of selfhood, or *khudee* in the language of Iqbal, is hereby given consideration and therefore balance in relation to the present-day oft-highlighted aspect of the quality of man.

If God be "the best of those who create", then, by virtue of preceding idea, He ought most surely also to be the most unique of beings. In this regard, Nicholson,⁵ in his comments on the philosophy of Iqbal, appropriately and concordantly remarks to the effect: "God Himself is an individual: He is the most unique individual."

The most complete person is accordingly considered to be the one who comes nearest to God. The more remote one is from God, the less is one's individuality; the more unique one becomes, the more one attains to the most unique Individual, namely God, "the best of those who create".

It is not without reason, therefore, that Einstein⁶ should have commented in the following terms:

"The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms — this knowledge, this feeling is at the centre of true religiousness."

Nor is the well-known message and moral of Iqbal (1944) — who claimed "no need of the ear of today", since his was "the voice of the poet of tomorrow" — yet to be doubted by anyone mindful of some of the relevant facts of knowledge, as subsequent outline hopes to show:

"The form of existence is an effect of the Self,
Whatsoever thou seest is a secret of the Self,
When the Self awoke to consciousness,
It revealed the universe of Thought" (p. 16).

"'Tis the nature of the Self to manifest itself:
In every atom slumbers the might of the Self" (p. 19).

The story of individuality embodies a fascinating link in the chain of relationship between science, art and religion

The story of individuality therefore embodies a fascinating link in the chain of relationship between science, art and religion, which form counterparts to one another. Their harmonious parallel — and co-development — is implicit in the earlier references to Einstein: "The cosmic religious experience is the strongest and noblest mainspring of scientific research." We will presently proceed to examine more precisely some scientific aspects of the problem.

In the realm of physical science, theoretical formulations have in recent times drifted from quantitative study, or the formulation of statistical laws and generalizations, to an examination of single individual events.⁷ Whereas classical physics was concerned with mass events, such as the average behaviour of particles or molecules, quantum physics, with its new approach, considered each individual aspect of energy (absorption and emission) as a single event, not always practically identifiable, but theoretically calculable and under certain conditions recordable. The scope of individual particulate study was later extended by the "field concept", in terms of which not only specific particulate differences, considered in vacuo from one another and from their field of occurrence, are of significance, but where also new and different individual as well as aggregate properties may occur due to a particular scene or field of occurrence of physical events.⁸ Space is *not* considered to be "empty". Concrete particles are interspersed within a field, on which the bodies exert their movement, which carries an effect on the next concrete body. The field is an active dynamic process in constant and unified interaction with the "material particles". The apparent, opposing duality of "empty" and "full" is thereby reconciled and synthesised in a general and unified concept of the universe.

What causes the uniqueness of every personality

Modern psychological theory⁹ holds every human being to be possessed of his or her own peculiar and characteristic perceptual or "private" universe. The uniqueness of every personality is attributed to differences in the "private world" or perceptual framework of one individual as compared to another, such differences arising from the individual's background of geographic environment and cultural and social contact in the course of development. Personality is consequently conceived, through this newer psycho-cultural approach, "as a dynamic process whereby the individual creates, maintains and defends his private world". Subjectivity hereby once again gains emphasis and man seems to be reinstated — as in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant¹⁰ — to the central position from which Copernicus had once dethroned him, since all reality, the nature of all appearance, basically becomes a function of our own minds.

The attributes of reaction can no longer be considered to show a one-to-one correspondence to the dimensions of the stimulus, as the traditional view of psychology would have us believe. All psychological behaviour is mediated by the individual's particular perceptual make-up at a given stage and time of life. It is only to be anticipated, therefore, that varying reactions should occur to the same stimulus by the same individual at different times as well as by different individuals. This view conforms to the biological concept of the life track (1951).¹¹

"The reaction of an organism at any moment is attributable not only to the nature of the stimulus applied but also to the reactivity of the organism determined by all the events which had affected that individual, and dating from the time of fertilization." Hence "some reactions can be evoked only within definable limits during the life track . . . rickets can be induced in young animals but not in adults."

Compare this formulation with the earlier statement of Rashevsky (1935):¹²

"The reaction of any organism is determined by its surroundings at a given moment as well as on the variations of the surroundings in its past."

Studies of individuality and tissue transplantation

Studies of individuality, undertaken in the fields of sociology, philosophy and psychology, have all been conducted on a phenomenological level, since overt behaviour and subjective response of organisms are ultimately rooted in underlying physiological processes, of which features of selfhood, consequently, merely constitute epiphenomena. The nature of such processes is complex and will not presently be attempted in relation to differences in overt behaviour and mental activity. Biological factors which distinguish members of the same and of different species will, however, be considered in the light of biological phenomena, namely, in terms of differences in physiological response. Such differences are considered to constitute a biological basis for the self or individuality.

Relevant studies are adequately dealt with by investigations on the phenomenon of tissue transplantation. It is well known, for instance, that tissues are not easily transplantable between members of the same and of different species. To quote Medawar (1957):¹³

"A human being is resolutely intolerant of skin grafted upon him from other members of his own species; so is a newt, chicken, mouse or cow; nor will even a goldfish accept a scale from any other."

What are the processes involved in such destruction or non-acceptance of foreign, grafted tissue, i.e., what are the biological factors which promote individuality in the host tissues? The mechanism is said to be immunological, in the same sense as the body is known to react to bacteria, viruses and foreign proteins by producing what are referred to as *antibodies*. The production of these antibodies, i.e., the induction of an immunity reaction, is therefore stimulated by foreign agents or substances, consequently designated as *antigens*.

Transplanted tissue (grafted tissue or donor tissue) will act as an antigenic stimulus to the host to produce antibodies, i.e., to promote an immunity reaction, with consequent destruction of the transplant.

Antigens from the transplant travel via the lymphatic system of the host to the regional lymph nodes, where the production of antibodies is stimulated, the lymph nodes constituting the primary site of antibody synthesis. Formed antibodies are then carried via the blood stream to the graft site where the donor tissue is brought to destruction.

Antigens responsible for transplantation immunity have been chemically identified as combinations of protein and

nucleic acid moieties, or, desoxyribonucleic acid (D.N.A.) nucleoproteins,¹⁴ substances known to constitute chromosomal material, confined to the nuclei of tissue cells. Transplantation immunity is consequently a function of the nuclei of these cells, amongst other possible factors.

The nuclei of tissue cells are believed to produce constantly and emit particles of nucleic acid. Such emissions are identical for all tissues of any particular organism, since all nuclei within an organism have exactly the same genetic constitution.¹⁵ These nucleic acid particles, which are antigenic in tissue transplantation and which carry the genetic hallmark of the individual, are also hypothesised by Medawar to play a role in the regulation of growth. Grafted tissue, with a genetic make-up different from host tissue, will therefore emit nucleic acids (i.e., antigens) of a different type from the nucleic acids emitted by host cells. This difference confers antigenicity on the donor tissue which therefore induces the immunological reaction, with resultant destruction of grafted tissue as earlier referred to.

Nucleic acids are also known to inhibit cell-division, or mitosis,¹⁶ and therefore the normal healing of tissues in general. Such inhibition probably occurring when the nucleic acid is different from that emitted by the tissue cells concerned. This may be a further operative mechanism in the rejection of donor cells by host tissue, foreign nucleic acids acting directly on host cells, as compared to the view earlier considered in terms of antibody production.

Patterns of physiological growth, differentiation and development are well known to be typical for all individuals and, indeed, for every organ within an individual.¹⁷ At no time could one refer to a growth curve, because growth is always characteristic of a particular organ and consequently of a particular individual, since organs develop according to a unique and characteristic relationship to one another, in a manner peculiar to every member of the same, or of a different, species. This situation was earlier foretold by proceedings of the New Orleans symposium on development:¹⁸

"In the realm of physical anthropology emphasis centred very largely around the question of growth. Papers and discussions . . . were focused to an unprecedented degree on the individual, as contrasted with the group. Indeed, the sessions devoted to this subject left a rather definite impression that we may be at the beginning of a new era, in which *individual, rather than mass studies, will be foremost*. The importance of observing the same individual over the largest possible period was emphasized by nearly every speaker who dealt with any aspect of development."

Factors regulating the growth and healing of tissue transplants, and therefore of biological individuality, is thus furthermore related — in addition to genetic factors earlier outlined — to some of the known physiological mechanisms underlying growth, differentiation and development of the normal, intact organism. This aspect of the problem constitutes a vast field of its own.^{17, 19, 20} The following is a brief, relevant consideration of factors concerned in the present study.

Patterns of differentiation and metabolism of host and graft tissue as factors in transplantation

The state of differentiation and metabolism of cells and intercellular material, as determined by the undermentioned

factors, is significant in determining the responses of host and donor tissue in transplantation :

(i) *Age*: An adequate connective tissue stroma and vascular supply by the *host* following transplantation is an *essential* local condition for the uptake of grafts. This property of host tissue is a function of age, amongst other factors. Embryonic tissue in comparison with adult tissue, for example, is more potent in producing connective tissue in response to transplants. Embryonic tissue, when used as graft tissue, will *evoke* the production of connective tissue in the host to a greater extent than *adult* graft tissue would.

(ii) *The nature of tissues concerned*: Host tissues which produce relatively more stroma in response to transplants are brain and the anterior chamber of the eye (iris). These are furthermore suitable transplantation sites since the brain is devoid of a lymphatic drainage whilst the anterior chamber of the eye is avascular. In comparison, host subcutaneous tissue produces a very little stroma and is therefore less favourable as a transplantation site.

The amount of stroma produced by the host tissue also depends on the nature of the graft. Histologically-different grafts evoke different amounts of stroma in the same host region. Kidney and breast epithelium are potent stroma evokers and show a high frequency of uptakes. Adrenal and brain tissue induce very little stroma production in the host and their incidence of uptake is very low.

(iii) *The nurture of transplants*: If donor tissue, which is poor in its *induction* of stroma, is transplanted on to host tissue, which is poor in its *production* of stroma, the incidence of the graft uptake will be nil or extremely small. However, embryonic tissue may simultaneously be used to evoke stroma production in the host, in which event even a poor donor *inducer* may "take" to a poor host *producer*. This implies that the *nurture* of graft tissue, in addition to the nature of tissues involved, is important in determining antigenicity. In other words, an essential growth factor is involved, in addition to a genetic incompatibility factor, in the survival of transplants.

The interdependence of tissues, or growth correlation, is a factor of relevance to this aspect of the subject. Different tissues of an organism normally develop in relation to one another, both pre- and post-natally. When graft tissue is isolated from a donor, the influence normally exerted on that tissue — in view of its interdependence with other tissues within the intact organism — is removed. The survival or subsequent pattern of development of this graft tissue in the host is consequently modified, since the transplant is subject to the effects of a new and different local and general biological "field" of the host tissues.

The role of growth correlation in determining antigenicity of graft tissue is illustrated by the fact that embryonic liver and placental tissue are not individually transplantable. These tissues do, however, "take" to the host if transplanted in combination with another sample of embryonic tissue.

Not only are tissues *locally* interdependent, but the body as a whole has a controlling effect on local growth processes. Such an effect of an overall controlling pattern or "field" on local growth processes constitutes a relationship between the final, complete form of the entire organism, or, the "individuation field", and any particular local region within that organism. This relationship may become disturbed, as for example in carcinogenesis or cancer production, when localized tumour tissue is no longer subject to

the control of the "individuation field". Such tumour tissue is described as *autonomous* since it develops independently of the normal control of the organism as a whole. The antigenicity of transplants would therefore be partly mediated by the "whole-body response", or, control of the "individuation field", of the host. The extent of such control — and therefore of transplant antigenicity — is known to vary with age, sex, species, individual and site within the host.

(iv) *Cyto-genetic adaptation*: It may occur that the growth of a tumour graft is initially resisted by host tissue. Certain cell variants from such a variable tumour cell population may, however, survive in being least antigenic to the host. This could be likened to a process of natural selection on a cellular level. Note, however, that variations in the tumour cell population must be attributed to cytoplasmic differences, since nuclear constitution for cells of a given tissue or organism is considered to be the same. A cyto-genetic developmental factor, stemming from cellular cytoplasmic differences, may therefore provide a basis for adaptive response. The original genetic pattern does consequently not set the seal to compatibility or incompatibility of tissues.

(v) *Species of phylogenetic development*: Tissue transplantation is more effective in lower organisms than it is in more complex forms of life and in man. Evolution has resulted in greater differentiation, integration, rigidity and fixity of the organism. This change is associated with increasing individualization of subsequent species. Physiologically this change is well-reflected and expressed in the process of development, through the ages, of a mechanism whereby living organisms became more and more independent — not only of one another — but also of the external environment. This process entailed the development of a mechanism whereby the organism's system would be least influenced by external effects of temperature, light, humidity, nutrition, tissue transplantation, etc. Such a state of relative physiological constancy was first postulated by Claude Bernard²¹ in 1859 in his concept of the constancy of the *milieu intérieur*, or internal environment, in respect of warm-blooded animals. This view was subsequently built upon and extended by later workers.^{22 23}

Some Islamic writers on the Evolutionary view of man

It is rather interesting that certain Islamic writers²⁴ have upheld an evolutionary view of man — comparable to the Darwinian theory of evolution — based on the authority of the Qur'an. The following are some verses, cited in support of such a contention :

"Has not there passed upon man (*Insán*) a long period of time, part of eternity-itself, when he had no self-realization of any kind?

"We (then) made him from a ball of sperm-ovum which We went on evolving and unfolding till it became hearing and seeing" (76 : 1, 2).

An evolutionary trend of thought, well known in the history of Islamic philosophy, is evidenced, amongst others, from the works of the *Maulana* Jalal al-Din Rumi :

"Dying from the inorganic we developed into the vegetable kingdom. Dying from the vegetable, we rose to the animal. And leaving the animal we became men. Then what fear that death will lower us? The next

transition will make us angels. From the angels we shall rise and become what no mind can conceive; we shall merge in Infinity as in the beginning. Have we not been told, 'All of us will return unto Him'?' (The Mathnavi, pp. 424, 425).

The relatively more highly-evolved state of individuality in man reflects an advancement in the drift towards human perfection; it depicts a characteristic which may well in the future — as much as it did in the past, as seen from the course of social history — be the single, outstanding feature of means to subsequent human progress and development.

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SHIRAZEE OF BENGAL (d. 1931 C.E.)

A poet of Muslim renaissance

A few verses from his poem "The Trumpet"

By MIZAN-UR-RAHMAN, M.A.

The Muslim poets of all countries have sung of Islam and its past, present and future, from age to age. In East Pakistan, the largest concentration of Muslims within one compact and administrative unit in the world, hundreds of poets and thinkers, from the earliest time to date, have done this, passionately and persistently, out of their compelling love for the Faith Divine. All honour to them and others all over the world for their efforts at inspiration, rectification and rejuvenation of Islam's dynamic dicta and dispensation.

I propose to discuss, briefly and in the light of his own writings, a poet who was all fire and passion for Islam throughout his rather short but crowded life. He is Sayyid Abu Muhammad Isma'il Husain Shirázee, popularly known as Shirázee, of East Pakistan. His span of life was from 1880 to 1931 C.E., devoted throughout to the cause of Islam, Muslim renaissance and national rejuvenation. He was a self-made scholar, a prolific writer in Bengali and a thundering speaker who could keep thousands spellbound for hours and enlighten them on different subjects of life in a profitable manner. He is the author of many books in prose and poetry, including fiction, epics, essays, travels, etc. His first book was *Anal-Prabaha* (The Flow of Fire), published in 1900 but proscribed by the then British Government from 1910 to 1951, which also threw the author into jail for two years for alleged sedition.

The Trumpet

Anal-Prabaha, written by Shirázee as a school student in his teens, contains thirteen long poems touching the Muslims and the Muslim countries throughout the world. It is a most passionate appeal to the Muslims to rise and fight for the vindication of Islam and the demonstration of its potentialities as a world force once again in the interests of *Tawheed* and humanity itself. Below is a free translation of a poem entitled *Turya-Dhwani* (The Trumpet), which furnishes a clue to Shirázee's mind, even at that early age, viz-à-viz Islam and the Muslim world. The other poems are more or less of a similar nature and in very eloquent and inspiring language.

Let this terrible trumpet ring in every Muslim heart !
Let the Muslims of the world wake up from the present slumber !
Let the flames of fire flare up in their veins like sparks of lightning,
And let them rise and rule the world as proudly as in the past !
O Muslims ! How long will ye slumber, dazed in infatuation ?
Will ye not rise once again even for a moment ? Ye are asleep,

But look how the fruits and flowers of your garden are being looted !
Your rule ranged from Java and Sumatra in the East to the Quiver in the West !
Your endless wealth and power, raised and reared with care,
Are now in the hands of greed and grab. Your health and happiness
And your pelf and liberty are being taken away !
Heart-rending wails are welling up all around !
Islam, your Mother dear, is now in tatters and tears, looking to you for redress.
O the Fools ! Will ye sleep on still, in unconscious sleep,
So that ye can be fleeced and finished by the forces of greed and grab ?

There stands Spain, a beautiful land on the Atlantic,
A Garden of Bliss delicately laid with care and toil.
It was the Muslim store of matchless and endless wealth.
Lit with lore, it was a dazzling centre of civilization.
It was a seat of science and philosophy, and a mine of letters !
The Teacher of Europe and a sparkling jewel for the earth !
It's now, alas ! a mass of heaps and memories gone,
With the grabbers strutting about, with heads held aloft !

For eight centuries, you ruled there with supreme power !
But ye are now cast away from there beyond the seas.
Every mote of that country is still crying aloud,
But not a soul of the Muslims is there to console the crying mote !
Here's the vast Ind, Nature's garden of bliss and beauty !
Well-watered, well-fruited, a grand store-house of wealth !
Your flag flew o'er here proudly for a thousand years !
The English and the French used to crave your favours.
Here they used to bow before you for your splendour and power !
But alas ! this our birth-place, our Paradise on earth,
Is now completely under the thumb of the incoming merchants !
In your land of love, you are now voiceless, mute !
Your Delhi and Agra are now bereft of their past glories !
Islam, your Mother, is now in tears and without a smile !
O Muslims ! Look how low you have fallen and how helpless you stand !

Cast your eyes at the Nile, on that abode of Nature's wealth!
 Here grew myriads of flowers of light and lore and civilization.
 Lit with the light of fortune like the solar rays and blest
 With the blessings of Saladin, the Terror of Christian powers,
 That land of Egypt, resplendent in glory and mighty in power,
 Is now alas! in the grip of merchants through machinations galore!
 Its vast wealth is well-nigh drained dry and exhausted.
 What a pity that this green fertile land should be spotted with blood!
 The intruders are, step by step, stabbing it deep and sore,
 With the sharpened daggers of authority disingenuously spread!
 And yet, O Muslims! Ye are not yet inclined to open your eyes even once!
 I cannot say how dark is your future, alas!

The mighty Arab hero with indomitable spirit is now in exile.
 The vast Sudan has seen the splendour and pride of Islam.
 It's the birthplace of the Mahdee, and a land of heroes.
 It's here that Gordon and Slatin had to give their lives,
 Unable to defend themselves. But alas! this land of heroes
 Is now in the hands of cruel intruders, who came into it by wiles,
 But have since succeeded in shedding the blood of thousands.
 Liberty, which is such a priceless treasure, is now denied
 To the people of the Sudan, whose star of fortune seems set.
 The Pride of Heroes and the greatly revered Saint,
 The great lover of liberty, conqueror of enemies and possessor of talents,
 I mean the Mahdee of blessed fame, whose dead body, after fourteen years,
 Was taken out of the grave and burnt to ashes! What a shame!
 The world stood stunned at the barbarity! The Angels
 Must have shuddered in hate and horror in the Heaven!
 Even the Throne of Power might have moved and shaken in shame!
 And yet, the Muslim world did not do its duty. The Muslims
 Stood disunited, divided and dazed in deadly dreams!

The great Turkish State, with its wealth and riches, stores and stocks,
 Is now being gobbled up day by day!
 The vast empire, so strong and mighty in the past,
 Is now being eaten up by wiles and guiles! Turkey,
 Once the Terror of Europe,
 Is surrounded by slayers, as if they were spearing a helpless deer!
 Rumania, Bulgaria, Servia, Montenegro and Greece — these Christian powers,
 Are now threatening Turkey with the Cross, night and day!

The Muslims are being driven away, crushed and oppressed,
 From places where they were proud masters only yesterday!
 Thousands of mosques have been converted into churches!
 To whom to tell my sorrows and the pangs of my burning heart!
 Turkey is sought to be uprooted, neck and crop, by Powers
 Prowling about, under this plea or that!

Look at the abode of the strong Moors on the Mediterranean.
 Morocco, that land of love and fortune, once a citadel of Islam in Africa —
 The land lit with the solar rays of Independence and a thousand memories
 Of glorious deeds and countless exploits and daring acts,
 Now stands surrounded by the forces of greed and grab!
 The tentacles of guiles and machinations are now hemming around!
 It is being denuded of its independence by the array of guns and batteries!
 Oh! these tentacles of slavery! The forces are arrayed
 To exterminate Islam from the world, and yet
 The Muslim world looks on, as if the Muslims have lost the power of vision!

Look at the great Turan, the Source of Islam's strength.
 Full of natural powers, and the towering mount of might, and glory!
 The land where Islam's light glittered for a thousand years,
 As if it was the gleam and glamour of the full moon in the sky!
 The land of the great Mughals, and the abode of the glorious Timur,
 Whose exploits have found place in the poets' reveries!
 The ruthless Russia has spread its tentacles over it!
 The Muslims, there, are now gasping under the shells of tyranny!
 The blessed Bukhara and Khiber are now sunk in the depths of drudgery.

They are passing their nights and days in extreme agonies!
 The land, which was once the Terror of Europe,
 Is now well-nigh eaten up by the Russian wolves!
 The lovely Algeria, on the Mediterranean sea,
 Is now in the grip of France after most wrongful fights!
 With Tunisia and Berqa, Algeria is under exploitation by the intruders!
 Thousands of Muslims stand torn and mown by shells!
 They are pictures of pity, in tatters and worn-out bodies!
 And yet the Muslim world did not stand to do its duty!
 They did not combine and constitute a joint force for protection!
 O Muslims! Look and see and realize the terrible conspiracies!
 O Lord Muhammad! Come and see what is happening!

Please come and see what terrible fire is consuming me !
 Send your blessings, Lord ! so that this sea of fire may
 rise
 In terrible waves and gobble up the enemies, neck and
 crop !
 Let this Trumpet ring loud and deep in every Muslim
 heart,
 So that they may rise to get the world rid of enemies !

The poet then refers, in a similar vein, to other Muslim countries, such as Syria, Persia, Afghanistan, Arabia, Malaya, etc., and points out the threats to Medina, Mecca and Bayt al-Muqaddas (Jerusalem), and concludes :

O Muslims ! Give up the slumber and rise,
 And combine and constitute a common phalanx in the
 East and the West.
 Sound this great Trumpet of Unity from side to side !
 Let your veins be lit with the blood of spirit, faith and
 courage !
 Let all of you, wherever you may be, come under the
 common flag !
 Let the Sultan, the Ameer and the Shah, combine
 together

To rekindle the sleeping powers of ISLAM for a
 common purpose !
 Let all combine to constitute a common ISLAMIC
 CONGRESS,
 And try jointly to recapture the seats of power already
 snatched away !
 Let the triumphant flag of Islam fly in the sky once
 again !
 Let the terrific cries of ALLAHU AKBAR ring in the
 sky all around !
 Listen to the Great Prophet's MESSAGE ringing in the
 clouds above :
 "ACQUIRE CONQUERING POWERS AND RID
 THE WORLD OF INIMICAL FORCES !"

Such was Shirázee, who dreamed these dreams when he was still in his teens, and who devoted all his life and energies to the cause of Islam and Muslim renaissance with his powerful tongue and pen, mightier than the sword, like a true believer and who had been to Turkey, soon after his release from incarceration, on account of his *Anal-Prabaha*, as a member of the Medical Mission from the Indo-Pak sub-continent (then India) in 1911, and personally presented his plan of an Islamic Congress to the Sultan of Turkey. He died at the early age of 51. May his soul rest in eternal peace in the heavenly home !

Continued from page 17

NON-MUSLIM EUROPEAN APPRECIATION OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

in the execution of such a great design no other instrument than himself, and no other auxiliary except a handful of men living in a corner of the desert. Finally, never has a man accomplished such a huge and lasting revolution in the world, because in less than two centuries after its appearance, Islam, in faith and in arms, reigned over the whole of Arabia, and conquered, in God's name, Persia, Khorasan, Transoxania, Western India, Syria, Egypt, Abyssinia, all the known continent of Northern Africa, numerous islands of the Mediterranean, Spain, and a part of Gaul.

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislatures, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls. On the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blended together peoples of every tongue and of every race. He has left us as the indelible characteristic of this Muslim nationality the hatred of false gods and the passion for the One and Immaterial God. This avenging patriotism against the profanation of Heaven formed the virtue of the followers of Muhammad; the conquest of one-third of the earth

to his dogma was his miracle; or rather it was not the miracle of a man but that of reason. The idea of the unity of God, proclaimed amidst the exhaustion of fabulous theogones, was in itself such a miracle that upon its utterance from his lips it destroyed all the ancient temples of idols and set on fire one-third of the world. His life, his meditations, his heroic revilings against the superstitions of his country, and his boldness in defying the furies of idolatry, his firmness in enduring them for fifteen years at Mecca, his acceptance of the role of public scorn and almost of being a victim of his fellow countrymen; all these and, finally, his flight, his incessant preaching, his wars against odds, his faith in his success and his superhuman security in misfortune, his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death: all these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was twofold: the unity of God and the immateriality of God; the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with the words.

"Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. By all standards by which a human greatness may be measured, what man was greater?"

THE PROSPECTS OF ARAB UNITY AND FORCES AFFECTING IT

By 'OMAR Z. GHOBASHY

What is Arab unity?

In this brief outline an attempt will be made to analyze the effect of external forces on Arab unity. By external forces I mean foreign policies of other powers towards Arab nationalism in its manifestation of Arab unity. Foreign policies include ideological attitudes which form part of a definite goal of a foreign power.

Arab unity is an internal movement of the Arab peoples under different systems of government. It is based on historical identity of language, tradition, and to a certain extent, religion. But it is not to be confused with a purely religious movement; for not all Arabs are Muslims, or a racial movement, because the Arabs do not represent a single race: they include many races. It may be stated that the Arabic language is the most unifying element in the move towards Arab unity. But even such a statement does not convey the true meaning of Arab unity, which is a movement of a people. It is neither a minority movement, nor a class or group aspiration, it comes from the majority and emanates from the masses. In it the average Arab sees strength, progress, development and dignity. It all depends on the individual Arab, his surroundings, his society and his education. The intellectuals among the Arabs view Arab unity as a solution to many social and economic problems. They look at the matter from a scientific point of view, and their support to the movement is not necessarily based on emotion, glory, identity with a great power or security. They simply think of the advantage of a customs union, removal of trade barriers among the Arab countries, population movements, an equitable distribution of Arab wealth, regional planning and a common market. The average Arab does not know all these technical terms, but in his heart he believes that Arab unity will solve many of his problems, will improve his lot, will raise his standard of living, will give him more security, more opportunities, and more freedom. He feels that such unity will make him a member of a better society which is healthier, stronger, more modern, better planned, and free from corruption and exploitation. The concept of Arab unity enforced by one Arab State or government against another is a misrepresentation of the true nature of the aspiration of a free people.

Why Western colonial powers are opposed to Arab unity

Unfortunately, this is often done deliberately to distort the facts for the purpose of preventing the achievement of Arab unity. There are still some elements that are not interested in Arab welfare, or their hopes, expectations and aspirations. These selfish elements flourish on disunity, division, distrust and rivalry among the Arabs. They believe that it is to their advantage to deal with many divided entities and small and weak States and with some faithful, obedient and trusted rulers than with a large, strong and modern State which can reckon with them as an equal and negotiate from a position of strength. If the Arabs are

united, these circles feel, they will no longer be occupied with local controversies and family quarrels, but will be in a position to face the world as a great power, will devote more time to development, will compete with their trade and industry, will have a bearing on their future dealings with other countries, and will serve as an encouragement for other unionist movements whether in Africa or in other areas.

It is clear by now that the unnamed powers which are not enthusiastic, to put it mildly, for Arab unity, are the Western colonial powers, particularly Britain and France. Although the Arabs do not consider the United States of America as a colonial power, they consider it as a power associated with the Western colonial powers. Association does not connote a tacit agreement to all policies of the Western colonial powers, but it is evident that the United States of America faces a dilemma in dissociating herself from her NATO allies, or in associating with the emerging nations of Asia and Africa.

Israel and Arab unity

HOW ZIONIST PROPAGANDA WORKS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

With the exception of Britain and France, other Western colonial powers have ceased to be a threat to Arab unity. We have witnessed the disappearance of Italian, Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish rule in the last decade, and we have also witnessed the diminishing of British and French rule. But the Arab world is still struggling against French and British colonial domination in Algeria, and the Arabian peninsula, and recently the Arab world fought the Anglo-French joint venture in the Suez Canal. In this misadventure, Britain and France formed a temporary alliance with Israel. Thus they who were totally opposed to the creation of a strong Arab nation at the expense of their influence, prestige and loss of colonies, joined hands with Israel, which was created as a result of Arab disunity and can prosper so long as the Arabs are in disagreement among themselves. But Israel's position is different, because its fight against Arab unity is based on Zionist belief that Arab unity and Israel cannot exist at the same time, that Israel will be exposed to a formidable force, that it has to reshape its policies and adapt itself to the new circumstances, that this will also mean a complete revision of the Zionist manifesto which is based on expansion and the in-gathering of exiles, and this cannot be fulfilled unless the Arabs are divided. That is why the Zionist propagandists picture the United Arab Republic and its President as attempting to dominate the rest of the Arab world. By this, they hope to arouse the fear of other Arab countries to resist and challenge United Arab Republic leadership for Arab unity. They also hope to gain supporters to stop this nationalistic movement. They call it Nasserism or Pan-Islamism, and brand it as harmful and dangerous, forgetting that the Zionist movement is a

form of nationalism based on religious superiority, which is as bad as racial superiority. Naturally, Britain and France and some elements in the United States of America follow this view by attacking Arab nationalism and supporting Zionist nationalism.

There is a similarity of views and an identity of opinions between the Western imperialist powers and Israel towards Arab unity. The only difference is the degree of fear. While the Western colonial powers are worried about the loss of their colonies and business interests, Israel is worried about its very existence and is aware of the controversial methods surrounding its creation in the heart of the Arab world against the will of the majority of the population of Palestine.

Arab unity and the Soviet Union

We will discuss now the position of the Soviet Union towards Arab unity. There is no direct evidence showing an open Soviet challenge to Arab unity. While it is not difficult to make a distinction between the Soviet Union and Communism, in this particular case the distinction will be misleading and will not help to evaluate or to understand the exact attitude of a major power that exerts great influence in the Arab world. We cannot labour under the misconception that local Communism emanates from local needs and traditions and has no connection with international Communism. It has been proved, and we need not belabour this point, that the relationship and connection between local Communists and international Communism is very strong. Communism is an international ideology whose ultimate goal is world indoctrination. The Soviet Union may dissociate itself from the actions of local Communists and call it an internal affair, it may disclaim any relationship with local Communist groups, but the fact remains that the Soviet Union will not look with disfavour on the expansion of Communism particularly in the Arab world and from it to the emerging nations in Africa and Asia.

We know that Arab Communists are opposed to Arab unity and any form of Arab nationalism. We also know that there is a strong tie between international Communism and Arab Communist groups. What remains to be established is the relationship between the Soviet Union and international Communism. If we do not make a distinction between the Soviet Union and Communism, we will reach the conclusion that the Soviet Union indirectly is opposed to Arab unity. If we make a distinction, it all depends on the degree and magnitude of this distinction. If this link is a mere sympathy, then Russia is sympathetic towards Arab disunity. If this link is hope, then Russia is hopeful that the Arabs do not unite. If international Communism is an arm of Russian foreign policy, then it is Russia's policy to carry it out and execute a definite policy to divide the Arabs. If Russia is bent on the propagation of Communism in the Arab world from within, does it make any difference or is it easier to execute this policy through many States or through a large and unified Arab State? If we take into consideration past experience and lessons of Communist expansion, we may reach the conclusion that it does not make any difference, for Communism was successful in countries of various sizes. But, the crucial point is the change which will take place if the Arabs are united. The steps which follow unity will make the Arab world less vulnerable to Communist ideology. When Arab nationalism triumphs, Communism will diminish. There is no co-existence between nationalism and Communism under the same roof, and one has to give way to the other. If we carry this analysis to its

logical conclusion, we may state that the Soviet Union does not exert a direct pressure on Arab unity, but it is indirectly interested in the challenge of local Communists to Arab nationalism and its aspirations. For immediate political and economic objectives, the Soviet Union may forgo its open espousal of the Communist movements in the Arab world, but in the long run this policy may well undergo a radical change.

The United States of America and Arab unity

We will discuss the position of the United States towards Arab unity. We purposely omitted the discussion of this topic in relation to other forces affecting Arab unity. As mentioned earlier, it is the opinion of this writer that the United States is in a class by itself. Its position is affected by the attitudes of the three forces discussed earlier. However, the United States has interests different from the other forces, and sometimes these interests clash with these forces. Take the case of Communism, for instance; the United States is inclined to support Arab nationalism in its struggle against Communism, but the United States may indirectly and unintentionally aid the Zionist forces which are working for the destruction of Arab nationalism and Arab unity. This is done by the tacit consent or the lack of control over the enormous financial, economic, military and propaganda support to Israel by the influential Zionist groups in the United States. Furthermore, while the United States differed from its colonial allies in the handling of some Arab disputes, as for example the attitude of the United States against the tripartite aggression against Egypt in 1956, it does not openly challenge the French domination of Algeria, or British domination of territories in the Arabian peninsula. Thus, the United States is closely associated with two opponents of Arab nationalism, Anglo-French imperialism and Zionism, but it is opposed to the third opponent of Arab unity, namely Communism.

The Soviet Union is in a similar situation, because of the three forces the Soviet Union is in favour of one, Communism, and is opposed to the other two, Western imperialism and Zionism. So both the United States and the Soviet Union are indirectly working with forces that oppose Arab unity, and at the same time against forces that oppose Arab unity. This is a confusing set-up, but to add to the confusion we may point out that opposing forces work together to achieve a temporary goal, and we have witnessed the short-lived alliance between Arab nationalism and Communists against foreign domination, and we know of the temporary alliance between Western imperialism and Communism against Arab nationalism, and we are familiar with Zionist overtures to the Communists and their efforts to reach an accommodation with them against Arab nationalism. We further saw the United States and the Soviet Union together in opposing imperialism and Zionism in the Suez war.

But all these are exceptions, and we are primarily dealing with constant behaviour. It is also difficult to study attitudes in terms of national interest, for States may forgo, or go counter to, or neglect their own interest by adopting a wrong policy. We have clear examples of the case of American and French support to Israel, which is not in the best interests of these countries. In the case of France, whose policy is based on the theory that the friend of my enemy is my enemy and his enemy is my friend. But France is losing the friendship and close ties with the Arabs, and when Algeria becomes free, France will be left alone with Israel. Other examples are found in Russian loans which

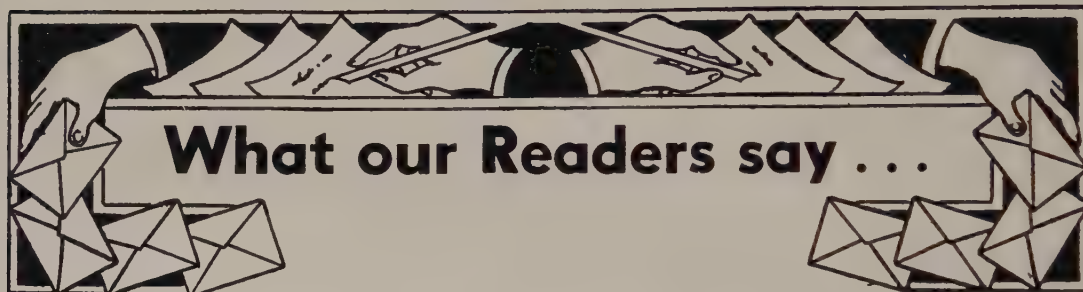
will help raise the standard of living, and this will be a barrier to Communism. But, in raising the standard of living and industrialization, a strong proletariat will emerge, and through it Communism may function. When it comes to economic aid and loans, underdeveloped countries cannot think very seriously of the hidden motives of the donor; the recipient is in desperate need for funds for development that he simply cannot afford to be very suspicious — he has to be careful and cautious, and that is all he can do.

Conclusion

We come now to the effect of these external forces on Arab unity in the coming decade. Zionism as a separate question represented in Israel will not be a major issue in the next decade. Though let us not underestimate the power behind the Zionist movement, it is clear that the Arab States are growing stronger day by day, that the United Arab Republic with the military and economic strength of Egypt and Syria combined is taking the lead, and the power is shifting towards it. No matter what quantities of arms Israel receives from sources known and unknown, we cannot ignore the manpower. From the strategic point of view, the United Arab Republic's military strength alone will surpass the Israeli's. So militarily speaking, Israel will not continue to

be the major threat to the Arab world. It will have to abandon any policy of expansion unless it enlists the aid of another power of superior military strength against the Arabs — and this is not feasible, for the Arabs can act accordingly.

Western imperialism is declining, and in ten years may cease to be an important force in the world. The United States is moving towards a policy of supporting the neutralists, and the military pacts may become obsolete. The danger to Arab unity, resulting from the different foreign policies of Arab governments towards neutralism, the West and the East, is shifting towards neutralism. Western military pacts which caused a wedge amongst the Arabs have disappeared from the area by the collapse of the Baghdad Pact. There is a sober public opinion in America which will eventually force the curtailment of Zionist activities, which are harmful to the interests of the United States. It is submitted, therefore, that external forces against Arab unity will be on the decline in the coming decade. The whole question then centres on internal forces and how powerful they will be to offset external forces. There are many internal elements which will be working against Arab unity, one of which was mentioned earlier, Communism; the other major internal forces are feudalism and other retrogressive groups. But even these internal forces are on the decline.



A CALL TO DISINTERESTED MUSLIMS

c/o Island Industries Board,
Thursday Island,
via Cairns,
N. Queensland, Australia.
6th June, 1960.

Dear Sir,

Recently a Muslim seaman was taken ill on a passing oil tanker, and the authorities radioed the station here to send the pilot boat to take him off and transfer him to the hospital on Bombay Island. The seaman came from Ratnagiri, Bombay, India. He told me he had a wife and two children and had been away from them for six months. I wish to mention that I am the only Englishman on Thursday Island who can speak Hindustani, and the hospital authorities sent for me to interpret for them. However, the seaman's name is Ibrahim 'Abbas. When I first met Ibrahim and both of us conversed in Hindustani, he told me that I was like a long-lost brother to him as we both spoke the same language.

Now there is something else I wish to notify you about, and that is there are several Malays residing on Thursday Island with large families. One or two of them approached me and said they were badly in need of a mosque and the services of an Imam. They told me they needed an Imam urgently to lead them in their sacred devotions and the teachings of the Qur'an, and that they can raise the money to pay the passage of an Imam to come here from Singapore and to reside here with them for three years. After three years' stay he could return to Singapore and another Imam could be sent out. The people of the Islamic faith here are willing to pay all expenses. Please can you help them? Perhaps you may know Imams in different parts of the world who may be glad to come and administer the faith to them. They told me they did not want to lose their faith under any circumstances whatsoever.

I sincerely hope you can get an Imam to come to Thursday Island to look after the religious requirements of the Malays.

Yours faithfully,

H. A. SAXTON.

SOME QUESTIONS THAT AGITATE THE MINDS OF THINKING MUSLIMS

80 Kemmanru,
Dist. South Canara,
New Mysore State,
India.

Dear Sir,

Assalamu 'alaikum

Now that the scientific era has dawned, setting marked differences in the values in respect of religious outlooks *vis-à-vis* modern socio-economic and political practices, these have considerably influenced Muslim minds and have become the cause of a large section of Muslims disapproving of the traditional approach to important points and dissociating themselves from the parent body under different names such as Mirza'i, Baha'i, and other groups. The present being the age of modern scientific civilization and parliamentary governments, enlightened interpretation by wise appreciation of points agitating people's minds are both most imperative and important, hence the request to answer the following points in *The Islamic Review*.

1. The Muslim *Iman* (belief) about the Qur'an: Whether it represents guidance of an eternal nature for Muslims in any region of the world, clime or society, or whether all Qur'anic revelations are knowledge by higher inspiration and intuition revealed through the Prophet. The former view is not quite satisfying today.

2. Traditional Muslim System of Education: This is a one-sided approach to religious teaching and is characteristically Arabic both traditionally and culturally. Does the approach satisfy the needs of modern Muslims in these days of science and modern civilization?

3. Muslim socio-economic and political approach of Qur'anic pattern: Do you think these will hold good during the present age of modern economic practices and parliamentary governments, when we know that the enlightened political consciousness and modern scientific civilization are the product of modern outlook and education?

4. Fighting power: Since the invention of gunpowder, traditional Muslim approach to warfare methods has suffered reverses all over the world, and now that we are living in the atomic age, do you consider the emphasis on the traditional Muslim approach to such matters satisfies the needs of Muslim countries?

5. Prayers (*salaat*): Do you think the traditional schooling in prayer on the lines of the Prophet's prayer discipline (five times daily prayer system) for enlightened modern Muslims is so important and essential in the face of heavy pressure of trade, profession, services, occupations and responsibilities of government?

6. Muslim property rights: These are being adversely affected due to parliamentary patterns of government, and more so in non-Muslim majority countries. The present land reforms in India, like those in extreme Socialistic and Communist countries, have a serious bearing on Muslim property rights. Do you consider the Qur'an will satisfy Muslims anywhere on such matters excepting in primitive theocratic Muslim countries?

I trust you will agree with me that it is important and urgent to restate al-Islam or the religion of the Prophet in the light of modern knowledge, and after a wise appreciation of these important points at a conference of world Muslims make it sufficiently attractive to the modern mind. I pray you will please do what you can.

Yours sincerely,

H. HUSAIN.

* * * *

CAN FRIDAY SERMON BE DELIVERED IN A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ARABIC?

Upper Mill Street,
Halfway Strand,
Cape Province,
South Africa.

Dear Imam,

26th August 1960.

'Assalamu 'alaikum

I request you to give me some enlightenment on a subject concerning the *Khutba* (sermon) of Friday prayers.

Our Imam delivers his *Khutba* in Arabic and then directly gives the translation in Afrikaans from the *Minbar* (pulpit).

- (1) Can he give the translation in Afrikaans from the *Minbar*?
- (2) Does the Imam Shafi'i condemn it?
- (3) Can *Jama'ah* (congregation) be performed in this way?

Yours in Islam,

R. SALIE.

REPLY

Dear Mr. Salie,

5th September 1960.

Assalamu 'alaikum

Thank you for your kind letter of 26th August. Under separate cover I am despatching you some free literature and our catalogue. The Friday *Khutbah* could be found in the book entitled *Prayer in Islam* by M. Y. Khan.

As to your three questions, my replies are as follows:

(1) The Imam can give the translation of the *Khutba* in Afrikaans or for that matter in any other language from the *minbar*.

(2) I do not think that the Imam Shafi'i has condemned it. A book of Shafi'i jurisprudence published in India has the following to say on this matter:

"*Arabic Khutba: Khutba* should be in Arabic provided anyone from among the *jama'ah* (congregation) knows Arabic, otherwise it can also be said in any other language. But as far as the question of the Qur'anic verse is concerned the condition of its being in Arabic shall stay" (*al-Mabsut* by Ahmad Jung, p. 246, published in Hyderabad, India).

This passage makes another point clear that if no one knows Arabic *Khutba* in the *Jama'ah*, it could be said in any other language. And your Imam recites it in Arabic and then gives its translation, therefore no objection should in fact be raised against it.

(3) The reply to the third question is simple. If the *Khutba* can be translated in a different language, the congregational prayer after it is also valid.

Yours sincerely, S. M. TUFAIL.

My dear Imam,

Assalamu 'alaikum

I hereby wish to thank you for your most interesting letter I received on the 16th inst., and also for the free literature received on the 23rd September 1960. Your letter answering my few questions was read in our *Jam'ah*, and it inspired and re-kindled a new spark amongst our followers who attend the Friday Prayers. It was thought that according to the Imam Shafi'i it could not take place, which resulted in a split amongst our few Muslims, who formed into a separate congregation.

Yours in Islam,

R. SALIE.

* * * *

THE ROLE OF MUSLIM WOMEN IN SOUTHERN INDIA

Gadbanhalli Estate,
Chikmagalur,
Mysore State,
S. India.

Dear Sir,

Before the advent of Islam, the Arabs, at least the majority of them, were a barbarous people. Some of them considered the birth of a female child a curse and humiliation to the family. Bloodshed, gambling, drinking, sensual enjoyment, quarrels even for trifling incidents and haughtiness were considered hallmarks of bravery and valour. The Prophet Muhammad transformed this disorderly, rowdy and decadent nation into a virile race. He gave the Arabs laws. He taught them how to observe cleanliness, patience, forbearance, discipline and nobility of character. From a state of extreme humility woman was elevated to a status where Heaven lay beneath the feet of a mother. She was given the right of personal freedom. With regard to divorce it was considered a lawful act but most disliked by God. Repeated attempts should be made for reconciliation before divorce could be pronounced. Monogamy was highly desirable in Islam because it was conducive to a harmonious life. But under special conditions one could marry another wife instead of resorting to illegal gratification. Mrs. Anne Besant, who lived in India and came into contact with Muslims, observes: "Woman is more protected by Islam than by the faith which preaches monogamy." Lady Cobbold, in her *My Pilgrimage to Mecca*, London, 1931, observes that the seclusion of woman is not an Islamic institution. The Greeks, even in their highest period of culture, imprisoned their women within their houses and denied them even the rights of inheritance. In Rome, women had their separate quarters.

When the Qur'an asks us to cast down our looks, surely it does not mean cover one's face. Women are asked to go to the Hajj, where both men and women congregate. They are explicitly asked to go unveiled so that they may not become a burden to their companion and at the same time look after themselves and move about freely. Women have questioned the Caliph 'Umar in the mosque. In Russia, China and Turkey they go freely to the mosques.

A great Indian educationist, Mrs. Iqbalunnisa Begum who was sent from Mysore, India, to study education methods in England, Turkey, Egypt and Switzerland, observes: "What we should realize is that the brighter aspect of Western civilization is a modern one built on the experience of many centuries in the East and in the West. The darker aspect of it is equally condemned by the West and the East. There is no dearth of darker aspects even in our own societies. To turn away from it as if it were something alien or hostile to us is to misread the lesson of history. Education is meant to supply the needs of home, society and country. Woman as a social being is as much a social being as a man. The gregarious instinct in us is so great that it compels us to be in the company not only of members of our own sex but also, when occasion demands, that of the opposite sex. Hence if a society is to be prosperous, progressive and happy it must have a reasonable amount of freedom to move in society. Otherwise Muslim women will be mentally or morally dwarfed, unfit successfully to tackle the problems of the modern world. They would be like a fish out of water. Reliance and self-confidence to stand on their own two feet must be inculcated. The faculties of the mind, such as observation, reasoning, power of expression, and above all to lead a successful life in the ever-changing world, is the need of the hour.

"For a nation to be brave, true and noble, its women should be its first thought. The Muslim people, who carried off the palm for bravery, hospitality, generosity, intellect, self-control and skill have abused all these wonderful qualities and have now degenerated into idleness, ignorance, bigotry, sensuality and pride. National excellence depends upon refinement of culture and discrimination of women. The conception of too much seclusion of women has also carried countless evil in its train. Two things are clearly involved — the child and the environment. Environment and mental stimuli are constantly changing. With a critical eye, a relatively progressive community must be flexible enough to adjust itself to the need of changing times, at the same time avoiding its defects."

If the full worth of women is not realized, national life of Muslims would be incomplete. We should be flexible enough to set an example to humanity in all walks of life in the ever-changing world by borrowing all that is best and eschewing the evil wherever it is found, and contributing something of our own to enrich the culture of the world.

Yours sincerely,

G. S. ABDUL HAMEED.

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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Customers are advised not to order books by Air Mail. Air Mail Postage is expensive. It costs approximately 16/- per lb.

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